THE

PAOKET:

A

NOVEL.

By MISS GUNNING.

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THE

PACKET.

CHAP. I.

Tender conſideration for the peace of others, a motive for ſelf-exertions—Lovers calculations leſs certain than ſanguine—Preſentiment made accountable for the want of curioſity—A morning viſitor—Newſpapers opened—Comments made—Suſpenſe vanquiſhed—Certainty eſtabliſhed.

MONTAGUE Davenport, ſeeing the ſpirits of his mother and ſiſter deeply oppreſſed, tried to rally his own, that they might not have cauſe to think he conſidered his ſituation by any means a deſperate one. —Indeed he found himſelf much better ſatisfied ſince he had aſcertained, by a very partial and ſanguine calculation, that a few days, or at moſt a few weeks, would bring him to the feet of his miſtreſs.

INSPIRED by this idea, he appeared to have imbibed new life, new hopes, new vivacity: he talked of his voyage, his journey, his return; and aſked Emeline, what he ſhould bring her from Paris?

BRING back yourſelf and our dear Adelaide! ſhe replied; I deſire nothing ſo much as to ſee you both again—and to ſee you together.

THERE is in the ſoul of man, and of woman too, I am perſuaded, an active principle, call it preſentiment—call it ſympathy—or call it impulſe—which tells us what to embrace, and what to avoid; it is a kind familiar, from whoſe inſtruction we ought not to turn away; it is a ſentinel ſtationed at the door of our hood-winked judgment, by the beneficent and all-wiſe Deity, to impreſs the ſenſitive mind of his creatures with the approach of good or evil:—kind is the warning!—and how uſeful ſhould we find it, did it but prepare us to meet the good with humility, and the evil with ſubmiſſion!

IF it were not for this *preſentiment*, how ſhould I be able to account for Montague Davenport, when his ſpirits were a little arranged after his recent diſappointment, taking up a book to read whilſt the ladies were working, rather than the newſpapers, which uſed to be rent, torn, and mutilated in their eagerneſs to get at the contents of them—ſo dear to their hearts was every ſcrap of intelligence they could get from this ſide the water, in their weariſome pilgrimage to another and far leſs beloved country?—

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or how ſhould I account for his mother or ſiſter not ſaying to him, Montague, open the papers?

An elderly gentleman, diſtantly related to the family, had been of much uſe to Mrs. Davenport in the law-ſuit that brought her to Ireland. He was eſteemed by them; entruſted with the affairs of their hearts as well as thoſe of their fortunes; and his young couſins thought him the moſt amiable man in the world, becauſe he was never tired of hearing them talk of Sir William Montreville and his lovely ſiſter.

Mr. Conolly (for ſo he was called) dropped in upon them in his morning rounds: he was informed by Mrs. Davenport of her ſon's intentions to leave Dublin the next day, and the cauſe on which they were founded.—I am glad of it, ſaid he, with a good-humoured ſmile; the man who would not take ſome pains for ſuch a miſtreſs does not deſerve her.——What have we here? added he.—The Engliſh papers—unopened too—this is being in luck.—Let me read them now, and it will ſave me the trouble of going to the coffee-houſe. He did not wait for permiſſion, but opened one of them.

The home news firſt, if you pleaſe, my dear Sir, cried Montague; our papers are ſo ſtuffed with foreign policy, that poor domeſtic honeſty is almoſt out of the queſtion.

With a clear, audible voice, Mr. Conolly began to read over a number of engagements in the circle

of

of ton for the week enſuing, which were pleaſantly ſucceeded by ſeveral anecdotes of faſhion, or, to ſpeak with greater propriety, of faſhionable people —a moſt excellent ſpecies of amuſement this, where thouſands are to be diverted at no greater expence than the ſacrifice of a good name, or blameleſs reputation! Far from being gratified by theſe ſort of ſquibs and innuendos the repetition of them gave the old gentleman's auditors no ſenſation that reſembled either delight or approbation—But what is the inſtance of three people taking no pleaſure in ſuch compoſitions, to the ninety and nine millions for whom they create an infinity of entertainment?

STUFF! cried Montague; be kind enough, my good Sir, to paſs over this maſſacre of innocence, and come to ſomething elſe that will be leſs likely to wound the ears of humanity.

WITH all my heart, replied Mr. Conolly; here is half a column more that ſhall be conſigned to oblivion—I would rather ſtand the brunt of piſtols loaded with ball, than pop-guns charged with ſcandal. He then proceeded to read of cabinet dinners, cabinet diſputes, levee and drawing room liſt of company; Newgate executions; elopements; ſome marriages that were completed, and ſome that were expected to take place; when without foreſeeing what was to come next, he plunged at once into the following paragraph:

ON Saturday evening was landed at Dover, the remains of Miſs ———

THE

THE name that followed ſtruck him dumb!—it was Montreville!—He ſtopped—coloured—grew pale—turned his eyes to the next column—tried to recover his voice, and heſitated ſomething about a robbery.

WHAT is that you have miſſed? cried Montague Davenport, ſtarting from his ſeat in all the frenzy of preſentiment—Whoſe remains were landed at Dover? Good God! why did you ſtop? why are you confuſed?—Let me ſee! let me ſee it! laying his hand on the ſhoulder of the agitated reader, wildly caſting his eyes on the paper.

MR. Conolly exerted all the ſtrength he had left to ſave him from the horrors of inſpection; he haſtily huddled it together, hid it in his boſom, and ſtaggered out of the room, leaving with Mrs. Davenport and the terrified Emeline a look ſo full of explanation, that they were at no loſs to gueſs at the extent of their bitter misfortune. Montague had flown on the wings of deſpair—had overtaken Mr. Conolly—had wreſted the paper from him—and now returned with it in all the rage of diſtraction.

SUCH a day—ſuch a night—ſuch a week—ſuch a month ſucceeded to this event!—Gracious Powers! who ſhall affix the limits of an agony like theirs?

AMONGST a multiplicity of readers, ſome, I doubt not, have loved a friend, and felt for the ſorrows of that friend as Mrs. Davenport loved and felt for Lady Gertrude;—perhaps too ſome young ladies may have

loved

loved the companions of their childhood as Emeline loved her Adelaide—But who is there, where is his name to be found in the archives of affection, that ever yet loved like Montague Davenport?

I HAVE loved like him! might be the honeſt anſwer of many an honeſt heart: nor am I inclined to diſpute the poſſibility; I will only aſk, If the object of that exquiſite paſſion is no more?—if ſhe was torn from you by artifice?—if ſhe expired in a foreign country, at a diſtance from all her tender friends, attended only by hard-hearted, ſelfiſh, diſtant relations? If ſuch was the fate of your miſtreſs, and you have a ſoul like Montague's ſoul, I am ſtriking on the centre of its feelings, and the ſtroke will revibrate?

THE mind of man is always active, either to load itſelf with additional troubles, or to promote its own contentment.—Whilſt the fate of our wiſhes hang in pretty equal balance, we complain of ſuſpenſe, and miſname it.—Montague had ſaid, There is no ſtate of ſuch irritable torture as a ſtate of ſuſpenſe—Suſpenſe began to retreat, and Certainty to advance in the form of death—in the form of eternal ſeparation! —He ſeized on Suſpenſe as a companion preferable to Certainty, and would not let her go till accounts from Sir William baniſhed every pretence for his detaining her any longer.

SIX weeks was Montague ſtretched on the bed of ſickneſs, and his diſſolution hourly expected!—What elſe would have prevented Mrs. Davenport from tranſporting herſelf and family to the caſtle? from

mingling

mingling their ſorrows with the ſorrows of Lady Gertrude? Sir William had reiterated his petition that they would come to her relief, and not to appear cold or ungrateful. Emeline had informed him of the true condition of her brother, and of their own miſery, which every day augmented with their fears for his preſervation.—What a ſituation was Sir William's, torn by contending duties!—On one hand, a beloved friend expiring, a beloved miſtreſs unhappy —on the other, a parent dear to him as his own ſoul, whoſe very being hung upon his preſence! If he withdrew this ſupport, ſhe muſt fall to the earth; if he did not go to Dublin, he could not perform the offices of friendſhip, nor wipe away the tears that fell from the beautiful eyes of his miſtreſs—What was he to have done, thus divided? I hope there is only one opinion on the matter, and that all my readers are ready to honour him for not quitting the couch of this dear mother, round which he conſtantly and fondly hovered, uſing no exerciſe but that of leading her about the chamber, when ſhe could be prevailed upon to vary her inactive poſture.

CHAP. II.

Grief a coward, frightened at the very food which offers for its nouriſhment—What is courted by the happy, is ſhunned by the miſerable—Comfort cannot be drawn from the comfortleſs; neither can all women keep a ſecret, or all removals be accounted for.

A BED-CHAMBER and dreſſing-room were the only apartments occupied by Lady Gertrude—ſhe could venture no further. Pictures of her daughter, by different hands, at different periods of infancy and youth, hung in the drawing room, the ſaloon, the library; her fine paintings, her pieces of needle-work, her various compoſitions of ſweet harmony—all theſe memorials of her loſt Adelaide, Lady Gertrude had ſtrength of mind ſufficient to requeſt her ſon might not be removed from their former ſtations—but to encounter the ſight of them, whilſt her wounds were yet green, was an effort to which ſhe declared herſelf unequal.

ONCE theſe charming productions of ſoul-inſpired genius had no competitor in the admiration of thoſe who beheld them, except in the more exquiſite lovelineſs of her by whom they had been executed; the eye was never ſatisfied with tracing out their beauties, or the tongue with proclaiming them.—What were

they

they at this period, when the blooming artiſt was no more?—mementos of departed happineſs!—now ſhunned inſtead of viſited!—from which even the very domeſtics turn away their heads with mixed emotions of reverence and horror. Theſe are emotions not to be defined!—you muſt feel to underſtand them.

Mrs. Grantly, whoſe name has already appeared in my ſimple narrative, had been a fixture at the caſtle as long as Lady Gertrude herſelf, and muſt have been very unfitted to her ſtation, if ſhe had not, with much humility, partaken in all her ſufferings: in performing the duties annexed to her office, daily did ſhe witneſs the little probability there appeared of any amendment in her lady's health or ſpirits. Mr. and Mrs. Armatage were conſtantly with her, and to them ſhe applied for conſolation, in hopes their opinion would be more favourable than her own—but they could ſay nothing to comfort her.

She next began to conſider what could occaſion Mrs. Davenport's abſence in ſuch a time of need, when her preſence might be ſo ſerviceable; ſhe did not ſurmiſe the deplorable ſtate of poor Montague: Sir William had no confidant in that dreadful ſecret but his friends at the parſonage, who were as cautious as himſelf to prevent the report of this ſecond diſaſter reaching the ears of Lady Gertrude; how could they tell her Montague Davenport was dying—that he died for Adelaide—and expect ſhe would ſurvive the intelligence?

WHILST this myſtery continued, poor Grantly was in a buſhel of perplexities what ſhe ſhould do; ſhe could not but think, if the two families were brought together, her dear lady would get better.—She would ſay to Sir William—Will theſe good ladies, Sir, never come back to us again?—To which queſtion, as often as it was repeated, he would reply with ſhort ſpeeches, but kind tones:—Not yet!—or, Would they were able to come!—Neither was ſhe always gratified even by a ſentence like this; but her curioſity was forced to feed on a deep drawn ſigh, or a ſolitary waving of the head, juſt as it happened that the accounts he had received of his friend were more or leſs flattering to his ever lively wiſhes—but ever fluctuating hopes.

FROM Lady Gertrude ſhe could neither aſk nor expect information. Lady Gertrude ſpoke ſeldom on any ſubject but the pleaſing one of her own diſſolution, and of a re-union in Heaven to the ſoul of her beautiful daughter; and on this favourite topic ſhe was more than eloquent. The Davenports were as dear to her as ever: ſhe never mentioned them without joining together the names of Montague and Adelaide: ſhe wiſhed they would return, that ſhe might ſee them once more, and give to the arms of her ſon an amiable wife, who would conſole him for the loſs of his ſiſter as well as for her own; yet ſhe waited their convenience for coming to her without impatience or repining, believing, as Sir William told her, that they ſtill waited the deciſion of their lawſuit, which had been decided in their favour long before, though the whole affairs were not ſufficiently

arranged

arranged to admit of their return till after the fate of Miſs Montreville was aſcertained, when a new obſtruction preſented itſelf in the dangerous illneſs of Mr. Davenport.

THOUGH theſe reaſons ſatisfied the calm and reſigned mind of Lady Gertrude, they had not the ſame ſalutary effect on a heart more alive to the common tranſactions of the preſent world; and when three months had elapſed, Dame Grantly (for, though a lady's woman, ſhe was a plain homeſpun body) ſilently began to accuſe the Davenport family, who, ſhe verily believed, could have done her lady more good than the doctors, of being leſs diſintereſted than ſhe would have been.—What are all the lawſuits upon earth, ſhe cried, or all the riches in Ireland, compared to my lady's ſatisfaction? I would not do as ſome folks do for more than is to be got by it. Once or twice ſhe took it into her head that ſhe would go over to Ireland to fetch them, particularly when ſhe fancied her young maſter's ſpirits would never riſe out of his ſiſter's grave till the voice of Miſs Davenport recalled them; and ſhe wondered how Maſter Montague, who was of ſo loving a nature, could ſtay away when he was ſo much looked for.

SHE had ſo often mentioned her diſſatisfaction to Mrs. Armatage, that, in pity to her perplexities, without conſulting her huſband, ſhe told her the ſecret of Montague's indiſpoſition, with many charges not to divulge it to any body, leſt it might come round again to Lady Gertrude; which ſhe promiſed never

never to do, and faithfully kept her promiſe. From this time her anger was converted into lamentations; ſhe had dearly loved the abſent family, and now that they were acquitted of wanting affection to her lady, ſhe loved them better than ever; whilſt ſuch accounts as were received by Sir William, of his friend's condition, were as conſtantly communicated to her by the compaſſionate and good-natured Mrs. Armatage.

THE remains of Miſs Montreville were brought over for interment in the month of Auguſt; it was now the beginning of December—her lover had not yet been pronounced out of danger, nor had her mother received any conſolation but ſuch as flowed from the filial piety of her ſon, and the unwearied attentions of the two dear neighbours, who had, from the beginning of her ſufferings, ſo tenderly ſymphatiſed in them. There is hardly, I believe, any meaſure of affliction ſo full but it will admit of a few more grains to be preſſed into it; and the ſmalleſt reſource to which the wretched can apply for comfort, taken abruptly from them, is, perhaps, more deeply felt than the happy are prone to feel for what they call a ſerious misfortune.—Lady Gertrude had but little to loſe, and out of that little could ill afford to miſs the benign preſence of a pious director to that abode ſhe ſo eagerly longed to inherit; and a ſoothing female friend, who ſeemed by the tendereſt attentions to ſmooth the path of her pilgrimage to that unknown country; yet to this loſs ſhe was obliged to reſign herſelf by the ſudden withdrawing

drawing of Mr. Armatage and his wife from the pariſh of Worthenton—It happened thus:

One day in the beginning of December, when the good pariſh prieſt was very much engaged in bruſhing up an old diſcourſe, or making a new one for the following Sunday, his wife, tired of ſitting at his elbow, and holding her tongue that ſhe might not interrupt his ſtudies, ſaid ſhe would look in on Lady Gertrude: the air being dry, and the evening ſtill, ſhe choſe to walk, ordering that the carriage ſhould be ſent to fetch her home at nine o'clock:—it was, however, at the caſtle before ſeven; and the ſervant who came with it delivered a ſhort note from his maſter, to ſay, he wiſhed her to return as ſoon as ſhe could, conſiſtent with the commands of Lady Gertrude and her own inclinations. It was enough; ſhe took her leave for that night, and went home immediately.

For that night—ſo ſhe thought on leaving the caſtle—but who ſhall ſay, in taking leave of a friend, when or if ever they ſhall ſee that friend again?—What cauſes this remark may be found in the following letter, which Sir William Montreville received from Mr. Armatage early the next morning.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Parſonage, Dec. 4.

On any other occaſion than that which now offers itſelf to entice me from your neighbourhood, I ſhould ſeverely

ſeverely regret the ſeparation, particularly as I am forced by circumſtances to take my little woman in my hand, and, above all, that we ſhall not have time before we depart to bring you our perſonal adieus—Accept them, dear Sir, from my pen, and convey them to your excellent mother, whom we hope to find in better health and ſpirits on our return, your young friend recovered, and that he, Mrs. Davenport, and her amiable daughter have joined you at the caſtle. You will doubtleſs ſay I am looking forward to a long abſence, if I expect that all theſe things are to be accommodated to my wiſhes—Perhaps it may be ſo—it may be long—it cannot be very ſhort.—The affair on which we embark is not abſolutely our own, but we are as much intereſted as if it only concerned ourſelves. A friend to whom my wife and I are ſingularly attached ſtands in need of our aſſiſtance, and except we fly to afford it, a whole deſerving family muſt be for ever enveloped in clouds of misfortune, which, the preſent opportunity once loſt, nothing can hereafter ever diſſipate.—Pardon me that I do not mention the name of theſe friends!—I hold their ſorrows too ſacred even to make you the confident of them. Bear your own burthen, it is heavy enough—bear it with manly ſtrength—as I am ſure your dear mother will ſupport hers with chriſtian fortitude; and fear not but God will reward you both.—We are going a long journey, but if we can do the good we meditate, it will be a glorious one. In the mean time I have taken care to provide for my church; my ſubſtitute is a pious worthy man, whom I can venture to re-

commend

commend to the notice of Lady Gertrude, if ſhe ſhould command his attendance. The bearer of this is charged with a key, which I have uſed the freedom to deſire you will receive into your poſſeſſion—I can truſt it with no other perſon, as it locks up the moſt valuable treaſure I have in my poſſeſſion. There are ſome private reaſons why I do not deſire that my journey ſhould become a ſubject of converſation in the neighbourhood, or that any body but yourſelf ſhould know that my views of abſence are for any longer time than a week or two. I have taken care that ſuch of my own family as we leave behind us ſhall have no cauſe to form a contrary opinion, as the welfare of the friend to whoſe relief I haſten very much depends on the motive of our journey not being diſcovered.—God take us all into his holy keeping—Amen—and farewell.

FRANCIS ARMATAGE.

SIR William was ſurpriſed at the contents of this letter, not becauſe his neighbours were going a long journey to comfort or accommodate a friend—in the whole routine of their conduct it was one of thoſe common actions that create no ſurpriſe; but he was puzzled to find out why Mrs. Armatage had not hinted their intentions when ſhe parted from them the night before. He called for the ſervant who brought the letter, and learnt from him that his maſter and miſtreſs ſet out in a chaiſe and four at break of day, attended by a groom—that they had

taken

taken ſome cold proviſions and wine in the carriage, by which he underſtood they did not mean to ſtop on the road for refreſhment. He afterwards delivered the key, which Mr. Armatage had deſired to depoſit with Sir William, who, having carefully locked it up, went to his mother's apartment to take his breakfaſt in her dreſſing-room, and to ſoften, as much as he was able, the account he was forced to carry of their neighbours ſudden deſertion.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The communication—How received—A ſpontaneous ejaculation—Great powers of affection—The ſtill greater ones of love—An old woman in new perplexities—A compound letter, which I hope will pleaſe the palate of all my readers.

LADY Gertrude deſired ſhe might hear the letter read to her which conveyed the unpleaſant news of Mr. Armatage and his wife having left the parſonage—Sir William readily complied with her requeſt; ſhe liſtened with attention, and then ſaid, joining her hands in an attitude of devotion, I thank thee, good God! that thou makeſt theſe thy excellent creatures ſerviceable to others as well as to me; they are ambaſſadors going on thy gracious meſſage to comfort the afflicted—proſper their undertaking I beſeech thee!—She then addreſſed her ſon with more cheerfulneſs than he had ſeen her try to exert ſince the death of his ſiſter, to convince him, perhaps, that ſhe ſtood in need of no other comforter than himſelf; talked ſo much of his dear Emeline, the happineſs ſhe ſhould feel when the tedious affairs of that family permitted them to return, and of the union to which all his hopes of happineſs were attached; that, as long as ſhe continued to ſpeak on thoſe intereſting ſubjects, every ſort of felicity ſeemed within his reach,

and

and it was not till ſhe relapſed into her former melancholy that he recollected her own health was not eſtabliſhed, or the life of his friend Montague out of danger; and all thoſe who have had occaſion to count by my calculation muſt allow, that preſent fears are a heavy diſcount on future expectations.

Mrs. Grantly was the perſon moſt tormented by the abſence of Mr. and Mrs. Armatage: ſhe could no longer hear from that kind lady how her favourite Maſter Moutague did, whether he was getting better or worſe. She walked about the houſe fretting and fuming—could neither eat nor reſt—and at laſt took the reſolution of making, as ſhe called it, a letter herſelf to Madam Davenport, in whom ſhe might repoſe her uneaſineſs without committing a breach of truſt, and expect from her condeſcenſion to have thoſe queſtions anſwered which ſhe could no more put to Mrs. Armatage.

After much ſtudy and three days labour the letter was made; which I introduce into theſe pages, rather to ſhew ſtrong affections and a good heart, than poliſhed language or a well-furniſhed head.

LETTER.

LETTER.

To Mrs. Davenport, at Dublin, in Ireland.

HONOURED MADAM.

Worthenton, Dec. 9.

I HUMBLY hope that when your ladyſhip comes back to the caſtle, you will not ſay to Sir William or my lady that I have had the boldneſs to make you a letter; but, indeed, I am very miſerable about poor dear Maſter Montague, who, Mrs. Armatage told me in a great ſecret, was very bad indeed—ſhe is gone away—ſo is the parſon—God knows where; for it was all of a hop that they did go—ſo now I have nobody to tell me any thing about Maſter Montague, without you, Madam, have the pity to ſend me a line directed to my own ſelf, becauſe Sir William does not know that I know of the dear young gentleman being ſick at all; and I promiſed Mrs. Armatage on no account ever to tell what ſhe had told me about him: ſo pray, good Madam, excuſe my boldneſs in making this letter to get ſome news of maſter's health.—God help me! my lady ſeems no better than ever, and I don't know which way to turn, now the

parſon

parſon and his wife are gone out of the country, who uſed to be at the caſtle night and day as one may ſay, and were kind company-keepers to my dear lady as well as Sir William. I ſee well enough there is no comfort for any of us till you come from beyond ſea. If Sir William ſhould die as well as my lady, what will become of Miſs Emeline, who loved the very ground he walked upon? It runs in my head, Madam, that my angel young lady will draw every ſoul after her up to heaven, and here ſhall I be left in this great caſtle like an owl in the deſert, and a ſparrow on the houſe-top. O Madam! you cannot think how much you are wanted—and I cannot help telling you my trouble—if you would but come when Maſter Montague is able to travel over ſea, my lady would be comforted, and Sir William cheriſhed; for I do believe nothing will ever do him any good till he ſees Miſs Emeline again, and till ſhe is running about by his ſide, here and there, backwards and forwards, rain or ſhine, as they uſed to do like two pretty chirping graſshoppers in a ſummer evening. I am ready to weep when I ſee how pale he looks; but let Miſs once bleſs his eyeſight, and we ſhall ſoon enough ſee the old colour come into his face again. Then think, Madam, what a bleſſing it will be to my lady, when you are once more ſitting by her ſide. My heart is ready to break with lamentations; for though ſhe is as quiet as a lamb, yet, for all that, ſhe is as melancholy as midnight—by her own good will ſhe would be always looking and looking out of the eaſt window in her dreſſing-room, but Sir William

liam draws her away from it as often as he can.—'Tis very bad luck that her ladyſhip ſhould take a liking to this window, becauſe 'tis the only one that ſhe could look out of and ſee the old yew trees that grow before Miſs's tomb in the church, and ſhe ſeems to know as exactly whereabout it ſtands as if ſhe had been at the dear angel's funeral!—Never ſhall I forget that doleful hour as long as I live!—He that planteth plucketh.—Would it had pleaſed God to pluck the weed, and ſpare the ſweet ſmelling flower! —I could have left Madam Johnſon behind me with a dry cheek; but it was quite another thing when I looked down for the laſt time on the coffin of my lovely young miſtreſs; for I did ſtep out a minute or two, juſt to ſee the laſt of her that could be ſeen, whilſt kind Mrs. Armatage ſat weeping beſide my lady, who knew nothing of the matter. Madam Johnſon ſtaid at the Montreville Arms a month; but Sir William would not let her come near his mama —I do not know for what; for, to ſay the truth, ſhe did behave very handſomely at church, crying and bewailing herſelf moſt piteouſly—but I do ſuppoſe, Madam, you know all this, and can tell too why ſhe was not let for to come to the caſtle. I hope Maſter Montague and Miſs Emeline, and your good ladyſhip, will all get the better of your trouble, and that my Lady and Sir William will be the better for your good company, and that you will excuſe my boldneſs, and that you will ſay nothing about it, and that you will all accept my humble obedience, and my prayers alſo for Maſter Montague's

gue's amendment, and that you will all come to my lady as ſoon as maſter is able to travel.

Honoured Madam,

I am your dutiful ſervant

to command,

MARTHA GRANTLY.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Eloquence contraſted with ſimplicity—The virtues of neither diſcredited by affection—The very beſt ſpecies of letter-writing is to cram in a great deal of information in a little ſpace—The author turns back, and the reader muſt follow.

THAT ingenuous ſpecimen of an honeſt feeling mind which concluded the laſt chapter, though it had taken up more hours to compoſe than in being conveyed to the head, yet it had not finiſhed its inland journey, when another and very different letter arrived at the caſtle from Mrs. Davenport to Sir William Montreville; which, by being inſerted, will yield a good contraſt to the former, if it affords nothing better.

LETTER.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

Dublin, Dec. 7.

A JOYFUL gleam of hope animates and enlightens the drearineſs of our proſpects—it ſeems to point

out a path to comfort—a path ſo long ſhut out from our view by clouds of impenetrable darkneſs. Should this divine ray improve upon us, and increaſe its influence, in a few weeks—perhaps ſooner—we may be able to join our beloved friends—when Montague, our dear Montague, though dead to his own felicity, may be able to take ſome ſhare in what will ſurely be felt on that occaſion by his mother and ſiſter.

Do you perceive, Sir William, that I am making no myſtery of my daughter's affection?—I go ſtill farther, and, without being abaſhed by the ſubject, ſhall declare to you, that the fate of her happineſs hangs decidedly on her return to the friends of her youth, in which number you may certainly include yourſelf, without committing any crime againſt humility. Did ſhe poſſeſs leſs candour than yourſelf, I ſhould not think her ſo worthy as I now think her of the delicate, conſtant, generous attachment with which you have diſtinguiſhed her.—But why is it that I am interfering in theſe matters?—your hearts, I make no doubt, perfectly underſtand each other.—It is becauſe my own heart dilates with gratitude, whether I look back on the years I have paſſed in the neighbourhood of your adorable mother, or forward to thoſe which are ſtill in the womb of futurity, fraught with promiſes to my Emeline of a ſtill fairer fortune, by uniting her to the moſt amiable of mankind.

YOUR letters of the 30th reached us but yeſterday; on many parts of the paper how eaſily did I

trace

trace out where the tears of manlineſs had fallen! Surely there is nothing wrong in the expreſſion, for would it not be unmanly to withhold the tear of ſympathy from the ſufferings of ſuch a parent as Lady Gertrude.—Emeline and I were almoſt blinded by the ſuffuſion of our ſorrows!—But Montague!—Oh! think how much more touching to Montague are the ſufferings we lament—the cauſe of them ſo blighting to his youth, ſo fatal to all his hopes!——His impatience to be with you is greater than can be expreſſed.—He inſiſts on croſſing immediately; there is hardly a poſſibility to reſiſt the vehemency, the impetuoſity of his deſires—and I cannot tell how ſoon we may be forced to comply with them.—I fear it will be a dangerous experiment, and I fear too there will be equal danger in oppoſing an inclination ſo invincible, ſo rooted.

THIS being an exact deſcription of our preſent ſituation, I have written ſome days ago to the perſon who takes care of the cottage to get it ready for our reception; and I leave it to your better judgment, whether Lady Gertrude ſhould or ſhould not be made acquainted with our preſent arrangement; to inform her that we are coming may prevent ſurpriſe, but it may alſo create diſappointment. My ſon's eagerneſs to be gone is no proof that he will find himſelf equal to the undertaking: however, the trial, I believe, muſt be made at all events. I write this day for a litter to wait our arrival at the Head; it is impoſſible he ſhould bear the motion of any leſs eaſy conveyance.

ANOTHER packet, and more letters from Sir William!—how good you are!—how kind!—But are you not leſs conſiderate than kind?—Pray how did you find out ſo very ſoon the orders I had ſent to my old woman? I am ſure ſhe could but juſt have received them, when you took up your pen to overturn all my plans of operations.—You have told Lady Gertrude we are coming—you are ſure of it, from having ſeen the directions I ſent over. You flatter me by ſaying your dear mother is the better for this information. She commands me to lay down my intentions of returning to the cottage; you ſtrengthen her commands by adding your own to them.——And why not return to the cottage rather than burthen the caſtle with my poor ſhattered invalid?—Becauſe Lady Gertrude, you tell me, is determined to be the nurſe of Montague!—Well! let it be ſo then! I remain gratefully ſilent; ever looking back with regret to the acquiſition my children have made to their fortunes as the cauſe of a ſeparation from your mother, at a time when our preſence might have been ſerviceable to her—Theſe moments cannot be recalled!—But I ſhall never ceaſe to lament the unſalutary uſe to which they have been applied.

EMELINE tells me we ſhall be too late for the mail if I ſay any more.—She has written you a long letter, and I am ſatisfied to releaſe you from further additions to my own.—Oh! that a wiſh could waft me to the preſence of Lady Gertrude!—Adieu, my dear Sir William; join your prayers with mine, that nothing may happen to prevent our voyage and journey.

ney. I tenderly embrace your beloved mother, and am the moſt faithful of your friends.

E. DAVENPORT.

SEVERAL months are elapſed in which ſpace I have not mentioned how the Honourable Mrs. Johnſon contrived to while away thirty days at the Montreville Arms, with no other ſociety than her two adherents, Mrs. Jacquiline Vernon and Mrs. Margaret Davis; it is not yet too late but that I might ſtep back two or three months to give you the neceſſary information. To time then let us bequeath the taſk of doing as much as he can for Lady Gertrude, hoping he may meliorate the colouring of her ſorrows, though he may not be able to efface them. Let us leave Sir William to the joys of expectation, with Emeline to bear her ſhare in them—to the fond attention of his mother I commit Montague—and every one of them I recommend to the protection of Providence, who doubtleſs will take care of beings ſo amiable and ſo diſtreſſed.—I only withdraw from them for a ſhort ſeaſon, and ſhall take them up again with a great deal more pleaſure than I lay them down.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Comparitive ſituations the true cordial for haunted imagination—Labour in vain—Fortune the beſt patroneſs, and fate the beſt director—The accompliſhed publican—Excellent entertainment—A ſhort apology for a long bill—The laſt ſpeech of a departing gueſt—A lingering look at the caſtle, and much intereſting converſation.

How Mrs. Johnſon contrived to while away thirty days at the Montreville Arms, is not ſo difficult to explain as if I had taken upon me to account for a fine lady's diſtribution of her time from the eighteenth of January to the fourth of June:—her avocations from birth-day to birth-day, are too numerous, too much ſpread abroad, for me to collect them together. Mrs. Johnſon had no buſineſs with ſeeing, being ſeen, making conqueſts for herſelf, or ſpoiling them for others—all her purſuits were confined to the pleaſures of the table, and all the pain ſhe felt was for the loſs of her packet, which misfortune may be traced back to her original foible.

The packet was loſt!—ſhe could not tell how—and the ghoſt of it everlaſtingly haunted her memory, except when her old diſorder of head-ſwimming returned—to which complaint ſhe was now every day

more

more or leſs ſubject.—Then, indeed, it might be ſaid ſhe was truly happy, or it was only in theſe fits of giddineſs that the loſt packet did not mix itſelf with the moſt pleaſant of her ideas.

To judge by the paſſionate exclamations of her grief, at the ill ſucceſs which attended all her enquiries and offers of reward to re-obtain this treaſure, one might very naturally ſuppoſe that the little miſſing parcel contained more than the value of all her other poſſeſſions It is gone! it is gone! ſhe would cry—and I cannot tell how. What little reaſon was there for complaint? becauſe ſhe did not know how? —have not ſome of the beſt eſtates in this country gone the ſame way, nobody can tell how?

No man old or young, who came to ſmoke his pipe or drink his pot of beer at the Montreville Arms, but was offered by the whiſpering Mrs. Vernon herſelf a hundred guineas if he ſhould be the fortunate finder of this tormenting packet;—for not being in the houſe, the caſe ſeemed plain enough, that it muſt have been dropped ſomewhere out of the houſe.

A VIEW to this great reward put a local ſtop to all labour:—Huſbands, wives, children, were diſperſed over the village, and having waſted in vain their precious hours, day after day, when they returned at night to their cots, inſtead of finding their induſtry crowned with a ſmoking meal, the poor tired creatures crept ſupperleſs to bed, with one only hope

remaining,

remaining, that they ſhould be in better luck ſome time or other.

THE only two labourers that were not employed in the ſcramble, and who never heard any thing either of the loſing or finding this magnificent treaſure, were Richard and Sarah Adams, who picked it up ſome months after, and carried it to the parſon of the pariſh, not knowing the rewards annexed to the diſcovery, had they put it into the hands of Mrs. Vernon.—Their profound ignorance in this matter muſt be accounted for, or it may appear altogether unnatural.

THE reward, indeed, had been offered to every body except themſelves, and the reaſon why they were omitted was extremely plain and ſimple.—They did not frequent the hotel, but fetched their little can of brown ale, when convenient to indulge beyond the luxury of ſpring water, from the Bird in Hand, whence they could get it a farthing cheaper, becauſe that houſe was not ſo faſhionable as the Montreville Arms.—And why they had not heard their neighbours talk about the great reward they were in purſuit of, probably proceeded from a motive by which more than half the world are actuated—not to choke the path of fortune, by filling it with competitors, who have as good a title to her favours as themſelves.—Fortune is a fantaſtical deity, often turning aſide from thoſe who run to meet her, and dropping in upon others who do not expect her viſits. It was the whimſical goddeſs herſelf who laid

this

this choice packet in the tuft of long graſs, bidding it lie ſnug, and not ſurrender into any other hands than thoſe who made it their capture.

How many unſubſtantial gueſſes have already been made to find out what this packet contained?—Curioſity muſt feed yet a while on the ſame airy food—I cannot go out of my way to appeaſe its appetite. A reader and a child may be eaſily over-fed: ſtarve them a little, and afterwards any thing will reliſh, even if it be only a cruſt of brown bread, or a cup of cold water!—I would bid him to a much better entertainment, but cannot think of letting the cat out of the bag, till I have prepared her to ſhew you ſome ſport. In the mean time, if you are not ſatisfied with the repaſt that now waits for you at the Montreville Arms, I ſhall declare with all the humility of a caterer, it muſt be your own fault.

Mrs. Vernon, beſides the advantage of foreign birth and foreign education, was in all other reſpects a moſt accompliſhed publican: ſhe was a little woman, and affable to all the world, except to the landlord of the Montreville Arms, who, being a peaceable man, and honoured with the title of her huſband, was content to wave any demands cuſtom might have given him to her civilities, that the whole large ſtock of them might be expended on the good of their houſe.

Mrs. Vernon ſpared neither trouble nor expence to enliven the hours that her patroneſs choſe to ſpend

in rural felicity:—Earth, ſea, and air, were made to contribute their greateſt delicacies to furniſh out her table; and the wines if they had any fault, it was that of being too good, or at leaſt too potent: yet, for all theſe choice things, ſo diſintereſted was the provider, that ſhe actually made an apology, and laid the blame of extortion on her huſband, for the very inſignificant ſum of only one hundred and fifty pounds; which Mrs. Johnſon very readily paid, the morning of her departure, aſſuring her timid hoſteſs, if it had been twice as much ſhe ſhould not have thought herſelf charged too heavily; which kindneſs Mrs. Vernon could only anſwer with her tears, ſeeing the kind lady juſt going to ſet her foot on the ſtep of the carriage—But ſhe ſtopped ſhort to obſerve the affection with which her friend and her Abigail were bidding each other a thouſand fond farewels, and ſaid to them with the moſt condeſcending grace in the world, I am ſorry to part you, but I am married, have a huſband to pleaſe, and children to take care of, who will no longer do without me; then putting her mouth cloſe to the ear of Mrs. Vernon, ſhe whiſpered ſeveral things in ſo ſoft a voice, that only two or three words eſcaped, and theſe ſo diſjointed that very little more than—packet—monument—and—remember—was to be made out of them.

Such were the parting ſounds that fell from the lips of Mrs. Johnſon!—and, as ſoon after as poſſible, ſhe was whirled through the beautiful village of Worthenton.

Now

Now through this village there were two roads, either of which ſhe might have taken, and her choice was decided in favour of that which lay neareſt the caſtle—ſo very near, indeed, as to command a full view of the windows of the turret apartment, where the ill-fated mother of Adelaide nurſed the viper of anguiſh in her boſom, ſtriving to hide it as much as ſhe could from thoſe who would have cruſhed it by the united force of affection, philoſophy, and religion.

CONSIDERING that Mrs. Johnſon muſt have known herſelf to be the remote cauſe of all the miſery that had fallen on the head of this comfortleſs parent, it appears ſtrange ſhe ſhould have ſtruck out of the direct and neareſt road, merely to paſs by the caſtle; it was poſſibly meant to prove that ſhe had committed no intentional outrage againſt the peace of her relations, who had not noticed her by a ſecond meſſage in the whole time ſince ſhe had taken up her reſidence at the Montreville Arms—the intercepted note from Mrs. Margaret Davis to *Maddamoſello Jackiline* having ſtopped all communication from the moment it was delivered by Mr. Armatage into the hands of Sir William Montreville.

HAD Mrs. Johnſon coldly and deliberately committed any ſecret ſin to deſtroy the happineſs of this once happy family, then might this inclination of her's be eaſily accounted for:—Experience muſt tell every reader, as plainly as it has ſpoken to me, that thoſe who injure you will alſo inſult you if they can.

THE

THE lady's woman ſometimes knows better than the lady's phyſician how her pulſe beats, and the exact temperature of her diſpoſition—when to adminiſter ſweets, bitters, or acids, and how to regulate the preſcription according to the exigence of the moment.—Mrs. Margaret Davis (to inſtance this remark) perceived ſomething in the inquiſitive ſcowling eyes of her miſtreſs, as ſhe approached near the caſtle, that made her immediately direct her own with equal eagernefs towards the turret windows, where ſhe hoped to find a remedy to calm the diſorder which was now quickly overſpreading the countenance of her good lady.

THERE ſhe is!——There is Lady Gertrude, Mem!———

WHERE, child?—Where is ſhe?—and Mrs. Johnſon thruſt herſelf quite out of the ſide glaſs, to contemplate felicity in ruins.

SIR William had juſt drawn his mother from her favourite window, whence ſhe could ſee the priſon houſe that encloſed the cold remains of her darling danghter; he had led her to another that fronted the road, his arm tenderly ſuſtained her faded form, and her pale cheek reſted on his ſhoulder.

ALARMED by the Johnſon livery preceding and following the carriage, Lady Gertrude would have retreated;—but meeting the impertinent glances that were directed full upon her, both by the lady and the lady's maid, her languid cheeks were inſtantly

ſuffuſed

ſuffuſed with a fluſh of retroſpection, in which terror was predominant. Uttering a faint ſcream, ſhe would have fallen to the ground, had not her ſon ſupported her in his arms—She tried to ſpeak, but could only ſay, Let me not ſee her!—and, whilſt Sir William was ſoothing and aſſuring her that nobody ſhould intrude into her preſence, the coach moved ſlowly by the caſtle gates.

THE head and ſhoulders of Mrs. Johnſon were not drawn back into the vehicle as long as ſhe could be gratified with feaſting her eyes on the emaciated figure of Lady Gertrude!—but, the moment it diſappeared, being properly reſeated, ſhe burſt into a loud laugh, which if it had any meaning, the expreſſion of it was ſomething between rage and exultation;—and being duly conſtrued by the attentive Abigail into a permiſſion, that ſhe might ſpeak her mind freely without fear of offending, ſhe alſo laid hold of the ſuppoſed indulgence—and ſhrugging, in imitation of the lady herſelf—I thinks, Ma'am, ſaid ſhe, her ladyſhip looks for all the world like a ghoſt.

SHE looks full of ſpite, retorted her miſtreſs, ſcornfully toſſing her head, and with more ſpitefulneſs of voice than ever entered into the boſom of Lady Gertrude.

MARRY come up! as your ladyſhip ſays, ſhe looks as if ſhe could eat one.—A body might think your ladyſhip had murdered Miſs Montreville, inſtead of taking care that ſhe wanted for nothing.—

I ſhudden

I ſhudden have thought of ſuch airs for my part—and then I hates hypocrites.—I never won't believe that all this here fuſs is about her daughter.

NOT at all, Davis, or ſhe would have gone about and enjoyed herſelf like other folks by this time :—no! no! her grief has its root in another cauſe—'tis not the girl, but the girl's fortune that ſhe is pining after.

YES, Ma'am—and as I believes—

BELIEVE!—Why it is paſt a doubt.—They are altogether a pack of baſe deſigners, who, having bewitched my grandmother (an old fool as ſhe was), and robbed my poor ſon of his birthright, now throw dirt in my face, and are ready to conſume me in the flames of their own envy, becauſe, forſooth, that dear boy's fortune is turned back into its own proper channel.

AND to my thinking, Ma'am, there can be no more properer channel.—So what ſignifies the matter of right? might will always overcome right.

STOP! cried her affable lady, with an air of impatience, I was not talking about right or might—Let me have no more of your ſtale proverbs.

LA! Ma'am, I begs pardon, and don't deſign to ſay another word about that there thing. I am ſure a more properer or a more handſomer gentleman

than

than young Mr. Johnſon is no where to be ſeen of a ſummer's day; it would have been a thouſand pities if ſuch a gentleman, who knows how to ſpend his money like a gentleman, had been cheated out of it —by his own relations too.—I defy Sir William Montreville to hold a candle to my young maſter for beauty and portlineſs.

INDEED, Davis, he is the pride of my heart!—but do not mention that vile Sir William—I hate him worſe than a toad.—I ſhall tell my ſon how I have been uſed by the caſtle trumpery; and if he does not fight that inſolent puppy, I diſclaim him: he may be the ſon of his father—but if he is a daſtard, he ſhall be no ſon of his mother.

LA! Ma'am, your ladyſhip ſets my blood all over in a tremble. Now, to my thinking, Ma'am, wodden it be more better, if there muſt be fighting, that maſter's papa ſhould fight.

HE!—was the conciſe and only reply beſtowed on this eligible propoſition. This *He* was pronounced in ſuch a manner as not to convey any diſapprobation to Mrs. Davis; and the ſmile which attended the exclamation encouraged the waiting gentlewoman to proceed in her courſe of obſervations.

BECAUSE, Ma'am, I thinks if ſuch a fine, tall, clever gentleman as young Mr. Johnſon was to fight and be killed, as moſt likely he would, for I have heard ſay the faireſt always goes firſt to the wall—we ſhould loſe the flower of his ſect. And what would

would become of your ladyſhip? You would die of grief as ſure as I am now living. But if his papa was to fight Sir William, it would be all the difference in the world.

WITH ſuch ſort of confidential chit chat did the travellers amuſe themſelves, until they were ſet down in Groſvenor ſquare—but as I do not attend them beyond the village of Worthenton, a great deal muſt be left to the imagination of others, that I cannot ſupply from my own. I have been too long out of the track already, not to feel impatient before I regain it: I therefore leave Mrs. Johnſon, and her entertaining companion, to purſue their town avocations; and ſtepping forwards more than two months, find myſelf once more in Dublin, perſuaded I ſhall in that ancient city meet with ſome tolerable ingredients to furniſh out another chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Subterfuges—Conſequences—Diſappointments—Obduracy—Conſultation—Compromiſe—Preparations—Efforts and other reaſons, beſides mutability, for a change in the diſpoſition of man.

ALREADY you know that Mrs. Davenport had informed Sir William Montreville of her deſign to make the attempt of removing her invalid ſon to the ſoil after which his ſoul panted. He had aſſured her that he was capable of making the voyage, and that if he ever recovered, it muſt be in his native air, and in the ſociety of his deareſt connexions.—This, he ſaid, but ſaid it to deceive; he had no deſire to live with his friends; the moſt fervent of his wiſhes was to die in their preſence, and to be buried by the ſide of Adelaide.

OTHER artifices were practiſed to the ſame end.—Montague had exerted all that remained of glimmering exiſtence; he had trimmed up his lamp of light though almoſt extinguiſhed; he had borrowed ſpirits from the gloomy hope that lay concealed in the ſecret receſſes of his heart.—It was theſe appearances

pearances by which his mother was actuated to take the neceſſary ſteps for their return to England:—the fineſſe was innocent; ſhe was equally miſled and elated by them; but though ſucceſsful in theory, the practical performance had nearly been fatal. He had aſſumed a part that nature would not aſſiſt him to perform—he relapſed with increaſing ſymptoms of danger; and other letters were diſpatched by Mrs. Davenport, to expunge from the mind of Sir William the dear expectations ſhe had given him leave to entertain two days before.

In doing this ſhe did not enlarge on her own melancholy ſituation, becauſe ſhe wiſhed to ſpare as much as poſſible any additional cauſe of concern to thoſe friends, whoſe burthen then was already too heavy—a ſentiment which mercy's ſelf pointed to Lady Gertrude; ſhe therefore only mentioned in general terms her ſon's total inability at preſent to undertake a voyage and journey of ſuch magnitude, regretting that their efforts muſt be deferred a little longer, and until there ſeemed ſome chance that they might ſucceed.

Mrs. Davenport, in her anxious haſte to ſend away this laſt epiſtle, on the contents of which Montague had not been conſulted, forgot to countermand the orders ſhe had given for a litter to meet them at the Head; and before the omiſſion could be rectified, or indeed before it occurred to her recollection, her ſon renewed, with more fervour than ever, his ſolicitations to be conveyed to the caſtle—His weak-

neſs

neſs was nothing—his complaints were nothing—he ſhould get rid of them all if indulged, or fall their martyr if oppoſed.

The phyſicians were conſulted; they allowed it was a deſperate experiment, yet not ſo much to be dreaded as the irritable ſtate of mind he would fall into if abſolutely contradicted; for theſe reaſons they entered into a ſort of compromiſe with his impatience, and he agreed to poſtpone what it was impoſſible for him to accompliſh. Eight days was the lateſt time he would grant to convaleſcent purpoſes; and one of the faculty, at the requeſt of his mother, conſented to attend him on the voyage.

Mrs. Davenport, who had taken away the hopes Sir William muſt have entertained, ſo flattering to a lover, did not write to renew them; not being able to perſuade herſelf that this new plan would be carried further than juſt to make a trial of her ſon's ſtrength, which muſt eventually terminate in diſappointment; and had Sir William himſelf witneſſed the embarkation of his friend, ſmall muſt have been his hopes that he would ever have landed on his native ſhore.

The day arrived—the hour was at hand—the baggage depoſited on board—and the phyſician ſitting by the bed-ſide of his patient, ready to aſſiſt him, if Montague perſiſted in what the man of ſcience declared to be an attempt againſt his judgment, and againſt all ſpeculative probabilities. Montague, the obſtinate Montague, did perſiſt, though three times

he

he fainted in the operation of having his clothes put about him—though his hands were covered with the tears of a deſpairing mother, and a kneeling ſiſter, both praying him, that for their ſakes he would deſiſt from his purpoſe!—On all other occaſions Montague had been the moſt ſubmiſſive of ſons, the moſt indulgent of brothers—on this he was more ſelf-willed than a woman!—Such a change on ſuch a diſpoſition it is no more eaſy to account for, than why man, in his own nature, is not invariably good, or decidedly bad, always docile, gentle, complying, or unchangeably ſtubborn, headſtrong and refractory: if there is any better reaſon to be made than man's mutability, it may be found in this ſad truth, that ſince the death of Miſs Montreville, Montague had been tired of life, and would have got rid of it on any terms ſhort of ſelf-deſtruction. He had none of thoſe hopes that feed the fantaſies of lovers; they were blaſted in their very bud: he loved Lady Gertrude—he dearly loved her:—Sir William was the brother of his heart; but his eagerneſs to touch the Britiſh ſhore was once more to behold with his eyes the repoſitory that contained his ſoul's treaſure, then to cloſe them for ever, and be placed in the ſame tomb with the deareſt of all dear creatures.

CHAP. VII.

Embarkation—Humanity—Good ſiſter—Diſintereſted counſel—Heavy eyes—Broken ſlumbers—A terrified mother—A wiſe phyſician—A lucky criſis—Letter-writing—Leave taking—And a journey begun.

STRETCHED on a mattreſs was Montague Davenport, the very ſhadow of a very ſhade, borne by ſix men to the water's edge!——A ſcene ſo intereſting is ſeldom witneſſed, and never to be forgotten. Familiar with danger, and inured to ſituations that commonly do not ſoften the heart of a ſailor, where the rough tars, who, in their arms, carried their poor ſhattered paſſenger over the ſhip's ſide, and would have ſhewn more ſteadineſs had the veſſel been ſinking at ſea, than when they conveyed him into the cabin, from which they afterwards retired, caſting many a kind look on the object of their care, and the diſtreſſed family by whom he was attended.

EMELINE had ſat up by her brother the preceding night; nothing could prevail on her to leave his pillow as long as there was any hope that ſhe might

might be able to prevail on him to delay his purpoſe a little longer—the leaſt ſelfiſh counſel ſhe could give him, when it is remembered, that by his perſiſting in it, ſhe would be ſo much ſooner reunited to him who was inexpreſſibly dear to her,—but the riſk of her brother's life was too great a ſacrifice to be made even to Love and Sir William Montreville.

Soon after they were got on board, Doctor Grant, the phyſician who went with them, thought, from the heavineſs of her eyes, that he was likely to have more than one patient; and when ſhe had ſeen her brother laid quietly on his bed, he inſiſted on her retiring to another cabin, and trying to get ſome reſt. For Mrs. Davenport's ſake if not for your own, ſaid he, you muſt ſubmit to be guided. It is enough for her that one of you are ſick at a time; another invalid would be more than we ſhould know how to manage. She took this advice in good part, and went to do as he had bid her.

Some time after Emeline was retired, the tenderly officious mother of Montague, ſeeing him more compoſed and ſatisfied than before his embarkation, began to look abroad with a ſort of ſanguine expectation, which very much reſembled the moſt delightful certainty. She was not miſtaken—he felt himſelf indeed better ſatisfied—he experienced all the luxury of a devotee to melancholy—ſhe was the goddeſs of his idolatry, and his fancy delighted to deck her with a thouſand graces! To lovers like Werter and Montague every thing changes its nature

—ſadneſs

—ſadneſs is joy—and pain is pleaſure.—There are no ſweets in hope, and no bitterneſs in deſpair!—Melancholy may be ſhunned by the happy, but it will ever be the choſen companion of the wretched.

He had juſt taken a cordial from the hands of this affectionate mother, when he fell intō a kind of ſlumber, which at firſt ſeemed tranquil enough.—After a calm which laſted half an hour, every inſtant brought with it a degree of reſtleſſneſs that perpetually augmented; he ſtill ſlept, but his eyes were only half cloſed, and the whites viſible; convulſive ſpaſms tortured his frame—and the groans that eſcaped him in this ſtate of forgetfulneſs aſſumed a language of their own, which told thoſe who were anxiouſly watching round his couch, that his was not the repoſe of eaſe, but rather the death-like ſleep of exhauſted nature.

Let us awaken him! cried the alarmed parent.—By nō means, Madam, replied the doctor; a criſis is at hand, and he muſt not be diſturbed—His fingers were on the pulſe of his patient as he delivered this opinion.

Good God! what is it you tell me, Sir? what criſis is at hand?

For heaven's ſake compoſe yourſelf, Madam! your affections are toō ſuſceptible for your peace; the criſis I am waiting for is more likely to prove favourable than otherwiſe—an abſceſs has been forming near the lungs from the firſt appearance of your

ſon's

ſon's indiſpoſition, and in twenty minutes I expect, by the tone of his pulſe, it will relieve itſelf.

An abſceſs! ſhe repeated—Gracious Providence! and is it poſſible that in his preſent ſtate of weakneſs he ſhould ſurvive the diſcharge?

It is more than poſſible, it is extremely probable, replied the doctor; who, if he ever held back his opinion, it was never ſuch a one as could afford conſolation to the friends of his patient—The whole human race have their diſlikes, their averſions, and their antipathies; ſome ſcream if a mouſe paſſes by them—ſome faint at the touch of a ſpider—and ſome at the ſight of a roaſted pig! Neither was the doctor without his peculiarities—but it was none of theſe: he could brave every diſguſting object in the creation better than the ſight of a fellow-creature in affliction, to whoſe diſtreſſes he could not adminiſter conſolation.

It is more than poſſible, it is extremely probable! —I give the repetition of theſe words as a proof of his humanity, and ſhall follow it up with another which will do equal honour to his profeſſional ſkill: Within five minutes of the time he had predicted the event happened, and before the day cloſed Montague was not only pronounced out of danger by his friendly phyſician, but in the immediate road of a ſpeedy and perfect recovery.

What a ſentence this for a mother, the half of whoſe exiſtence hung on the life of this beloved

youth,

youth, and for a ſiſter who would have yielded up the faireſt of her proſpects, and the deareſt of her hopes, if by the ſacrifice of them ſhe could have added to his preſervation!

INNATE comfort, ſuch as Mrs. Davenport and Emeline now enjoyed, is a counterpoiſe againſt the common evils to which all living beings are liable, whether at home or abroad, on land or on the water. Storms, contrary winds, and a lengthened paſſage, neither alarmed their fears, nor diſcompoſed their tempers. On the third day they diſembarked at the Head, without complaining of fatigue, that the voyage had been tedious, or of bad accommodations. In the reſtoration of Montague was included all the repoſe, all the calm, all the ſunſhine, all the joys, all the conveniences that could have attended the moſt proſperous and expeditious adventures: it is certain they were never before ſo happy, and perhaps for this ſimple reaſon, that they had never before been ſo miſerable.

As ſoon as they landed, Mrs. Davenport loſt no time in appriſing her friends at the caſtle of the fortunate event with which their voyage had been attended, and that they now ſhould very ſoon meet their embraces; but could appoint no time, as it would yet require many days of reſt before her ſon would gain ſtrength ſufficient for the journey, having an invincible objection to uſe the litter provided for him, and being determined to travel in her car-

riage, which ſhe was endeavouring to have made as commodious for him as it could be made.

THIS letter Sir William received, and the Davenport family ſtaid on the health recruiting party long enough to get his anſwer. Perhaps there may be ſome who will cry out, Why had not Sir William been his own meſſenger, and flown on the wings of love to meet Emeline? I anſwer, that the pinions of love were c" :ped by the edge of duty, and he would not fly from his mother, even to meet the woman who was to be his wife! If there are ſtill any who will accuſe him on the ſcore of wanting affection for his miſtreſs, I am not of the number; neither was Emeline, becauſe ſhe had acted by nearly the ſame principle in perſuading her brother not to leave Dublin, when ſhe would have given any leſs price than his health for one peep at the caſtle, and another at the dear owners of the caſtle.

DOCTOR Grant did not take his leave of the family till he had ſeen them ſeated in the carriage, and, with his own hands, placed his patient in the beſt poſture of eaſe he could deviſe; when being, as he well deſerved, moſt liberally rewarded for his long attendance, he ſhipt himſelf on board the packet, and left his friends to purſue their journey by ſhort ſtages; a preſcription that did not agree with Montague's impatience to reach that ſpot where ſtood the mauſoleum which held the aſhes of Adelaide, with which he hoped his own would ſoon be mingled.—This was his private ſentiment, his mo-

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ther and ſiſter had already ſuffered too much on his account for him to make them partakers of it.

Two days before they left the Head, Mrs. Davenport had again written to Sir William, and fixed the time when ſhe thought it was likely they ſhould get to the caſtle; but this letter by ſome fatality or other never came to his hand.

CHAP. VIII.

Good advice thrown away—A tempeſtuous night—The clock ſtrikes twelve—Repentance too late—The fall of Cerberus—His exclamation when down—His petition when riſen—Violent effects produced on the nerves of a lover, by the ringing of a houſe bell—A great deal of confuſion; and a young lady run away with.

DOCTOR Grant's advice reſpecting long reſt and ſhort ſtages was totally reverſed by Montague's impatience to contemplate the thrice hallowed repoſitory of all he loved in life, and all that he wiſhed to be united to in death!—Short reſt and long ſtages haſtened their arrival at the ſummit of his forlorn expectations: on the third day (or rather night) of their inland peregrinations, they reached the village of Worthenton.

MRS. Davenport, who had all the reaſon in the world to ſuppoſe, after her laſt letter to Sir William, that their preſence could at no time be unexpected, did not oppoſe her ſon's inclination of driving directly to the caſtle.

THE

THE weather had been remarkably mild for the laſt week in December, and the moon favourable to light them on their journey, till they were within five miles of compleating it;—when ſuddenly the heaven-ſuſpended lamp became almoſt inviſible; a thouſand dark clouds rolled ſucceſſively over its illumined countenance, black as the fate of Montague; pale thunder and flaſhes of red lightning joined their terrors to heighten thoſe which agitated the minds of the travellers as they approached nearer to the habitation of Lady Gertrude.

IN the midſt of this terrible ſtorm they found themſelves at the caſtle-gates—juſt as the ſteeple clock ſlowly and ſolemnly announced the midnight hour, every ſtroke of which was anſwered by one more deep and melancholy from within the walls, where ſolitary ſilence ſeemed to reign, unmoleſted by cheerful ſounds or cheerful objects; not ſo much as a glimmering light from any of the windows held out its little aid to animate the gloomy horror of the ſcene.

MONTAGUE groaned as he reclined his ſinking head on the boſom of his weeping ſiſter, whoſe own approaching happineſs was loſt in the profundity of his miſery. Mrs. Davenport ſuppreſſed the emotions of her equally lively, equally tender feelings, to ſay ſomething that might comfort her children.—Nature may be aſſiſted, but ſhe will not be forced; and the words of conſolation expired unformed on the lips of their parent, who, too late, repented her indul-

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gence in bringing them into ſuch a ſcene at ſuch an hour; ſhe would now have recalled it, but before ſhe could expreſs her orders to be carried to the inn, one of the ſervants had alighted from his horſe, and was gone up to ring at the caſtle-gate, in purſuance of the lateſt orders given him, and that he ſhould do it gently, ſo that Lady Gertrude might not be diſturbed if ſhe ſhould be gone to reſt.

The old porter, juſt riſen from his bed, ſtalked towards the inner gate, and cautiouſly opened it; he had not taken off his night-cap, and in his hand carried a lantern, which he held up to the footman's face, whilſt he demanded what family he belonged to, who would venture themſelves out at ſuch a time of night, and in ſuch tempeſtuous weather.

Do you not know me, Maſter Biſhop? ſaid the man—We are all come here:—here is my lady and all of us—thank God! they are ſafe enough—but we that ride are wet to the bone—ſo let us in as faſt as you can.

Biſhop, who had lived twenty-five years at the caſtle, was ſo uſed to Mrs. Davenport and her young people, that, next to the principals within his own walls, they were nearer to his honeſt heart than any other created beings: he could not hear that they were now actually at his gates, and preſerve his pace or his equilibrium; in mending the one he loſt the other, his foot ſlipped, and he had nearly fallen under the carriage wheels.

WHEN he came up to them, Mrs. Davenport was giving orders to the other ſervant to bid the coachman turn about and go to the Montreville Arms; the old porter had heard part of theſe orders before he could recover from his proſtration, and cried out with all his force—Stop a minute, Madam!—Stop a minute! I ſhall let you in in an inſtant.—He had jumped on his feet, and was now ſtanding by the coach-ſide.

MY good friend, I am glad to hear your voice, though I cannot ſee you, ſaid Mrs. Davenport.—You muſt let us go now. Here has been ſome miſtake—I have written to your maſter, but find we are not expected—we ſhall throw you all into confuſion; if we get out, we will ſleep at the village, and come again here early to-morrow.

GOD forbid that your ladyſhip, my young lady that is to be, and my young maſter that ſhould have been, ſhould turn away from my gates, like unwelcome gueſts, to ſleep under any other roof.—If I was to do ſuch a thing, there's an end of the poor old porter, and another would ſoon enough take my place.

WHILST the lady and the porter were thus contending, Sir William, who was not yet gone to bed, though retired to his chamber, had heard the houſe-bell ring, and ſtarting at the ſound, opened one of the ſhutters, threw up the ſaſh, and repeatedly called out to aſk who was there: but the ſtorm was ſo high

that

that his voice could not be heard any more than he could hear the ſound of the carriage-wheels, and which had not been diſtinguiſhed by him. His heart whiſpered him he knew not what; it was a ſweet tale that flattered the deareſt of his hopes, and however improbable it ſeemed, he gave it inſtant entertainment.

NOTHING but the flight of a bird could equal the rapidity of his motion as he deſcended the ſtairs, nor did he ſtop even to breathe till he had reached the porter's hall: his own ſervant had followed him down, and began to fear his maſter was gone diſtracted—for what was there in the houſe-bell ringing at an unſeaſonable hour, to alarm a man of his valour and conſequence? and ſure enough the idea of a miſtreſs coming to the door of her lover at midnight, and, as might be ſaid, in a whirlwind, could never have entered the brain of any body but a lover.

THE door of the hall was open; a guſt of wind put out the candle Sir William carried in his hand, without knowing what he was about—he had juſt taken it from his ſervant; being in the dark, he liſtened for a moment, and heard the porter call out in a loud voice, Indeed, Madam, I muſt go and tell Sir William!

THEY are here! they are here! cried Sir William—Rouſe the ſervants—ſend me all the aſſiſtance you can—but do not let any body go into my mother's chamber. Theſe commands were incoherently

iſſued

iſſued as he followed the ſound of Biſhop's voice, which did not miſlead him, but brought him to the haven where he would be.

I HEAR you, my beloved friends—I now hear you ſpeak, cried he; you are come, and my felicity is ſealed—But where are you, how ſhall I ſee you? where is my adorable Emeline?

I AM here, ſaid Emeline, and would come out to you this moment; but our dear Montague is ſo bad that I cannot move from him—his head reſts on my ſhoulder, and he is as cold as ice.

HAD not your Honour better take my lantern, cried Biſhop, and look at Miſs a bit, before we can get the ladies and Mr. Montague into the houſe.

SIR William would certainly have embraced the offer, if, juſt as the good porter made it, the carriage had not been ſurrounded by a multitude of flambeaux, held by as many ſervants, at the head of whom Mrs. Grantly preſided, her perſon in diſhabille, but her countenance adorned with every ſort of gem that can pourtray what are the moſt valuable treaſures of a feeling, honeſt, grateful heart, almoſt ſpent in wiſhing for that time which was now ſo happily arrived.

MRS. Davenport ſtepped from the carriage—Sir William received her in his arms with a truly filial but haſty embrace, and then extended them with the fond hope that ſhe would be followed by her

daughter: but Emeline was not to be moved from her ſeat, 'till her brother had been firſt taken out; he had not attempted to ſpeak, which ſilence they had partly attributed to the ſhock of his ſituation, and partly to the weakneſs of his frame, and the fatigue of travelling; but when two of the men went in to aſſiſt him from the carriage, whilſt his mother ſtood at the door to receive him, they found he was unable to help himſelf, and that he had fainted on the boſom of his ſiſter.

The ſcreams of Emeline, when ſhe heard what was his ſituation, and fancied it even worſe than it really was, might have pierced a ſoul of adamant.—What then was the effect you can ſuppoſe they produced on Sir William? There were ſo many in the coach, and about the ſtep, that his paſſage to her on that ſide was entirely barricaded; but he flew to the other ſide, and burſting the door with ſo much violence as to ſeparate the lock from its hinges, he forcibly dragged her from the hold ſhe had taken of her brother, and carried her into the houſe; nor was ſhe even miſſed by her mother, until Montague had been alſo conveyed thither.

Sir William, having placed Emeline on a ſofa, bathed her hands with many and mixt tears of joy, grief, rapture, and apprehenſion; and beſought her, for his ſake, to moderate her fe..rs, which could not adminiſter to a brother's repoſe, but might deſtroy a lover, whoſe life depended on her health, her happineſs, and her affection for him.—By arguments ſuch as theſe he recalled her to ſome degree of calmneſs

neſs—left her in the care of the women, and went back at her eager requeſt to give his aſſiſtance, where ſhe told him it would be much more uſeful, though not ſo dear and flattering as ſhe acknowledged his goodneſs and tenderneſs were to herſelf.

WHO ſhall ſay what were the feelings of Sir William Montreville, when in the ſaloon he met the dear companion of his infancy—the friend of his youth—the lover of his ſiſter—dying for that ſiſter—and born on the arms of his attendants, in a ſtate of inſenſibility—his mother, with a fortitude all her own, holding his hand—and Grantly weeping over his pale face, letting her tears drop on his temples, as faſt as the hartſhorn with which ſhe was bathing them?—Sir William's feelings are not be deſcribed, but there are many, I hope, who will underſtand them.

CHAP. IX.

The open door—The picture—The relapſe—The bed-room—The invalid—The embrace—The bleſſing—The hoſtage—The cogitations—The reader; and the writer.

A DOOR ſtood open—this door led to the drawing-room:—It was unfortunate, miſerably unfortunate, that here ſhould hang a full length picture of Miſs Montreville—and that here, in the general confuſion, Montague Davenport ſhould be conveyed for the reſtoration of his ſenſes: nor was the error found out till after he had recovered them; when, fixing his eyes on that fatal object, he called out on the name of his ſainted Adelaide, and fell again into his former ſtate of inſenſibility.

SIR William cauſed him, in this relapſe, to be conveyed into his own bed-chamber; and ordered another to be prepared for himſelf, though he did

did not take poſſeſſion of it that night—neither did the ladies leave the pillow of this beloved Montague, before they ſaw him reſtored, compoſed, and comforted.

It was paſt four o'clock when Mrs. Davenport retired from her ſon's apartment, followed by Emeline: Sir William conducted them to the door, and committed them to the care of Grantly, with many fond expreſſions of fear for their health, and repeated charges to the good woman, that their reſt might not be diſturbed, or any foot ſuffered to approach near the doors of their apartment, until their bell ſhould ſummon the attendance of their own women.—Mrs. Davenport embraced him with a heart full of unſpeakable gratitude, for his goodneſs to her ſon and themſelves. Emeline, with a ſweet bluſh, which enlivened the cheek of penſive beauty, ſaid to him, extending one of the faireſt hands in the world, God bleſs you, dear Sir William, I ſee you love us all as well as ever.—She gave him no time to reply; he had only an inſtant to impreſs one haſty kiſs on the lovely gift ſhe preſented—for, as if ſtruck with the freedom of her ſhort expreſſion ſhe hurried away, but not without leaving behind her a hoſtage, of her ſoul's good faith: this hoſtage was a look ſo rich in promiſe, that Sir William impriſoned it in his heart, nor would ever diſmiſs it from thence, even after he had received the bleſſing for which it had been left in pledge.

SHORT as had been the abſence of Sir William from the ſide of Montague, he found him on his return fallen into a profound and quiet ſleep.—He put himſelf into an attitude of obſervation to watch his ſlumbers, and employ his thoughts wholly on Emeline, and the laſt fugitive look with which ſhe had entruſted him.—His ſick friend, his ſtill unhappy mother, whoſe afflictions would, at firſt, be rather augmented than meliorated by the return of theſe dear ſtrangers, whom ſhe was to embrace the next morning: theſe contemplations which would ſometimes obtrude themſelves, raiſed certain meditative ſcenes, gloomy enough; but the image of Emeline produced flaſhes of joy, which ſhewed like ſparks of fire in elementary darkneſs.

I AM conſcious that I ſhall have readers of many deſcriptions, and that every one of them has a right to be ſatisfied in their own way;—but what ſignifies this pre-knowledge when I cannot do what ought to be done? Of thoſe who love to read of hair-breadth eſcapes, and marvellous tranſitions, I can only beg, that they will wait with patience till I am in a diſpoſition to gratify them.—To others, who delight only in the gay repreſentation of diſſipated life, and faſhionable manners, if they ſhould be diſcontented with my ſimple narration of domeſtic ſituations, I ſhall tell them they are unreaſonable, to expect from my pen ſcenes that would neither pleaſe nor improve them. —What is called the great world is a treacherous ocean, on the boſom of which are ſailing many ſeeming

ing delights, but if overtaken, they will be found nothing more than diſguiſed dangers—falſe friendſhip—falſe love—lies uſurping the form of truth—plots concealed in the bowels of myſtery—and all uniting to deſtroy whatever does not partake of its own nature.—I have marked the crooked features of deception—I know exactly where the rocks and quickſands of hypocriſy are ſituated—I have no pleaſure in rehearſing them, and will ſet you an example in my own future conduct, eſtabliſhed by the leſſons of experience, not to look for conſtancy in the hue of the chameleon, or to gather the roſe of friendſhip from that tree where I know the ſcorpion envy has once harboured.

If another ſort of reader ſhould find fault with me becauſe I dwell too long on the diſtreſſes of thoſe characters I have introduced to their acquaintance, let it be conſidered as ſome extenuation of the offence with which I may be charged, that whatever colouring the mind has received from good or bad fortune, will reflect itſelf in ſpite even of our beſt endeavours, on whatever buſineſs the mind is at all concerned. The hopes that have been ſhipwrecked, may ſtill lift us above deſpondency, but are not a focus to attract lively ideas, or to draw about them the rays of cheerfulneſs. The heart that has been wounded by treachery, and ſaddened by adverſity, chooſes rather to aſſociate with plaintive ſorrow, than feſtive mirth. From this ſingle motive I ſhall purſue the beaten path before me; and having made you all

ſpectators,

ſpectators, willingly or unwillingly, of a very pathetic ſcene, I ſhall afterwards try if ſomething better may not be found out for your further entertainment.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Sleep the beſt friend of the wretched—Love ſends an old woman on his own errand—Love's meſſage received, and his meſſenger rewarded—A church preferred to any other ſpectacle, and a party of friends miſtaken for a gang of thieves.

MONTAGUE ſlept ſo ſoundly after the fatigues of his journey, and the extreme agitation he had fallen into on his arrival at the caſtle, that when Lady Gertrude's hour for breakfaſt called Sir William from the ſide of his friend, he left him ſtill in the arms of repoſe, and ſtole ſoftly out of the darkened chamber.

THE firſt perſon he met was Grantly, and the firſt queſtion he aſked was how the ladies had reſted, and if they were yet ſtirring.

LORD, Sir, ſhe replied, Miſs Emeline is handſomer than ever, and looks quite like an angel this morning!

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He caught hold of the old woman's hand, as if ſhe had been telling him the moſt unexpected and agreeable news that ever a fortunate meſſenger conveyed.—Dear Grantly! ſaid he, is my charmer up?—is ſhe ready?—will ſhe admit me to ſee her, to ſpeak to her, before I go to my mother?

Oh! dear Sir, I believe not—for Miſs is but half dreſſed yet.—She ſent me, and ſo did her mamma, to liſten at Maſter Montague's door, and if I heard any body about, they bade me go in and aſk how he did; and above all to give their love, and hoped you did not find yourſelf the worſe for ſitting up all night.

Are you ſure Emeline deſired her love to me, Grantly? or was it only to her brother that ſhe ſent it, and ſo you have perhaps confuſed her meſſage, becauſe ſhe civilly hoped I had not ſuffered by my attention to him?

Heaven help me, Sir!—how could I be confuſed about the meſſage, when I had the very words from Miſs Emeline's own mouth?

I will give you a guinea, ſaid he pleaſantly, if you can repeat them exactly as they were ſpoken by her.

I don't deſire fee or reward, Sir, for what I can as eaſily tell you as I could ſay my catechiſm—I had juſt taken up my lady——

THAT's true, interrupted Sir William, I have forgot till now to aſk you how my dear mother does this morning?

SHE is near about it, I think, Sir; but when you have told her the ladies and Maſter Montague are come, by God's mercy, I hope we ſhall ſee her leſs melancholy.

WELL, now go on—and ſo you had juſt taken up my mother—What then, dear Grantly?

WHY, Sir, when I had led my poor lady into the dreſſing-room, and placed her at that terrible window, where ſhe will always ſit when you are not in her ſight, I aſked if I ſhould go and ſend up your man to ſay breakfaſt was ready; ſo took that opportunity to ſtep in and ſee the ladies who I knew muſt be getting up, as they had ordered themſelves to be called exactly at ten o'clock.

IT was too early, cried Sir William; but tell me what they bade you ſay when they ſent you to enquire for Mr. Davenport.

FIRST, Sir, Miſs Emeline's mamma deſired I would be ſo good to liſten, as I told you before; and if you go in, ſaid ſhe, and your maſter ſhould be with my ſon, give our love to him, and tell him we hope he will ſend you back with good accounts of his own health and the health of his friend.—And have you no word, Miſs Emeline, ſays I, to ſend to

my

my young maſter?—I ſhould like to carry him your love as it were by itſelf, becauſe when it comes in a lump with any other body's it is never ſo much thought of—I ſaid this to make Miſs ſmile; for indeed, Sir, if you had not ordered me to ſpeak out, I did not mean to tell you how free I had made.

You are a good creature—I ſhould be ſorry if by this liberty you had incurred Miſs Davenport's anger.

There was no fear of that, Sir: ſo you would have ſaid if you could have ſeen how good-natured ſhe looked—how kindly ſhe took me by the hand—and how ſweetly ſhe ſaid to me—Yes, dear Mrs. Grantly, you may give, and I charge you not to forget it, mamma's love and mine to Sir William, and tell him, we hope he does not find himſelf the worſe for ſitting up all night—And now, Sir, added ſhe, you have got the whole contents of my budget.

And I think it worth double the purchaſe-money I offered, cried he in an ecſtaſy of gratified love, forcing the honeſt bribe upon her reluctant acceptance; and now ſending her back to the ladies with ſuch a meſſage as could not fail to ſatisfy them, both on Montague's account as well as his own, he went directly to his mother, deſiring the ladies would come into her ante-room, that he might conduct them to her preſence the moment he had broken to her that they were already in the houſe.

Sir William found Lady Gertrude ſitting exactly in the ſituation Grantly had deſcribed, with her head reſted on her hand, and her eyes fixed on the village-church. Hearing the door open, and gueſſing it was her ſon who was coming in, ſhe haſtily drew them off, wiped away a tear that had been engendered by the ſolemn ſubject of her contemplation, and roſe up to meet him, with a ſmile that was the true child of fondneſs, but bore no relationſhip to joy.

He embraced her, as was always his cuſtom to do; and, leaning on his arm, ſhe ſat down at the breakfaſt-table by the fire-ſide.—I fear, ſaid he, my dear mother, you have reſted ill to-night: I hope I may be miſtaken; but I think you look more languid than uſual.

Surely, ſaid ſhe, you muſt have been diſturbed by the tempeſt as much as I was—I never heard any thing ſo tremendous:—then looking in his face, ſhe added, Dear William, you make me ſuppoſe, by your deranged appearance, that you have not been in a bed ſince we laſt parted: if you have lain down, you have certainly taken no ſleep.—But pray now tell me, was there not ſome accident that happened in the houſe laſt night?

Upon my honour, not that I have heard of, he replied.—Why is it you ſurmiſe ſo?

The truth is, my dear, whether it was the work of imagination or reality I cannot tell, but I thought I heard ſtrange noiſes beſides what were occaſioned by

by the ſtorm—people walking about—doors flapping —voices and even cries ſeemed to aſſail my ears. I conſidered my own vapouriſh habit, and how many ſpectres melancholy delights to create—or I ſhould certainly have alarmed you with the ſound of my bell, under an idea that we were beſet with thieves, and even that they had entered the walls.

You heard us then, ſaid Sir William, though I took every precaution that could be taken to prevent it.—Be not alarmed, my dear mother. It was not thieves by whom we were beſet; but it was the ſincereſt, tendereſt, beſt-beloved of friends by whom your walls were invaded.

Oh! exclaimed ſhe, and are they come? is Mrs Davenport, is Emeline, is Montague? are they, indeed, arrived?

All! all, my deareſt mother; but for God ſake be compoſed, or I will never let them behold you, if I think their preſence will create agony inſtead of producing comfort!

Agony! repeated ſhe, how little do you yet know of my heart, William! All that I can feel of additional comfort from what you adminiſter, I ſhall find in their ſociety: all that I can feel of agony is paſſed; ſo let me ſee them immediately; for I am more than impatient to embrace them.

There is a certain ſtage to which the human paſſions may go; beyond which they cannot paſs. Lady Gertrude's

Gertrude's were arrived to this higheſt point of ſenſibility; here they reſted; and now ſhe could look round her with a calm fortitude that gave even the appearance of apathy to every object that preſented itſelf before her. Adelaide was gone for ever; happineſs had gone with her; and it was only the death of her darling ſon that ſhe would now have thought worthy to cloſe the rear of her accumulated miſeries; from that trial ſhe fervently prayed to be ſpared: for all other promiſcuous events, of good or evil, her mind had mechanically prepared itſelf

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

It is too much, cries Miſery—I can bear more, ſays Fortitude—Interview the firſt—The chronologer—Interview the ſecond—Compaſſion effecting what philoſophy could not have effected—No tête-à-têtes—A pleaſant companion—The chronologer—and a good-night.

In deſpite of the firmneſs which exquiſite grief had eſtabliſhed in the mind of Lady Gertrude, it received a conſiderable ſhock, as ſhe held in her arms the beloved friend of her early days, the partaker of her moſt fortunate hours—as ſhe ſaw at her knees the gentle Emeline, and felt her hands covered with the tears of her loſt Adelaide's dear and beautiful companion.—It is too much! ſhe cried; almoſt too much!—yet I am able to bear more; let me go through the whole pleaſing, painful, penetrating interview at once.—Where is Montague? Let me preſs him to my heart—that diſtinguiſhed Montague who was beloved by my Adelaide—that miſerable Montague who has for ever loſt his Adelaide.

If it is underſtood how deeply every one of this little party were intereſted in the ſorrows of Lady Gertrude, it would be folly in me to ſet about deſcribing what were their ſenſations when ſhe called upon them to bring into her preſence the lover of Adelaide: they put her in mind of his indiſpoſition, and did not conceal the ſituation in which he now lay, in the next apartment to her own.—I knew, ſaid ſhe, as if the idea brought with it a melancholy ſatisfaction—I knew how it would be with poor Montague!—Ought we to wiſh, added ſhe fervently, preſſing the hand of Mrs. Davenport, that ſouls ſo wedded, who lived but for each other, ſhould even in death be ſeparated?

The mother of Montague, who had been ſo lately and ſo nearly deprived of this dear ſon, well as ſhe loved her friend, was too ſelfiſh a parent to coincide with her opinion, and too ſincere to put on the appearance of adopting it; ſhe therefore remained ſilent, affectionately preſſing her lips on the cold cheek of Lady Gertrude.

Sir William, who had been long accuſtomed to the ſoul-piercing plaintiveneſs of his mother's language, anxiouſly fixed his eyes to watch what effect it produced on the ſpirits of his gentle love; and ſeeing her face bathed in tears, her boſom heaving with ſighs, he fell at the feet of Lady Gertrude, and uniting her hands with thoſe of Emeline, pleaded their mutual claims to her affection with ſo much energy—their mutual dependance for happineſs on

her exertions to conquer the grief that oppoſed it, with ſo much eloquence—bringing to her memory the promiſe ſhe had once made him, with ſo much exactneſs, that ſhe acknowledged, and again ratified the engagement, weeping over her beloved children, bleſſing and embracing them; and when they all ſat down to breakfaſt, if ſhe was not the moſt cheerful, it could not be diſcovered that ſhe was the leaſt happy of the domeſtic party.

Sir William was elated by the viſible change on the ſpirits of his mother; and to ſee that ſweet ſerenity returning, which he feared would be fatally driven from the boſom of his charmer, he could not conceal how much he triumphed in the conqueſt he had gained over the moſt ſtubborn ſentiment a ſuſceptible mind can entertain: his vivacity came back to him; his eyes ſparkled with tranſport; and Emeline thought ſhe had never ſeen him look ſo amiable or ſo handſome.

Sir William and Miſs Davenport aſſiſted each other in pouring out the tea, and preſenting it to their comforted parents; and once or twice ſhe had nearly ſcalded her delicate fingers in rectifying his blunders, of which he made a hundred, and apologized for them, by laying all the blame on her awkwardneſs.—Lady Gertrude ſmiled; ſo did her friend; and Emeline ſeemed to be much better pleaſed than if he had charged all the errors he committed to his own account.

Sir William's man, whom he placed in the ſick-chamber, to bring him intelligence as ſoon as his friend awakened, now came with the long expected meſſage; and the whole party, except Lady Gertrude, paſſed immediately into his apartment: ſhe indeed was anxious to go with them; but her ſon mildly over-ruled her inclination, by hinting his wiſhes that Montague might firſt be prepared to receive her.

They found him ſo much refreſhed by the long ſleep he had taken, that they were not able to prevail on him to have his breakfaſt in bed.—I am impatient, ſaid he, to throw myſelf at the feet of Lady Gertrude, to thank her for the honour ſhe intends me:—I am ſtrong enough to go to her—ſhe muſt not have the trouble of coming to me, neither will I conſent to ſee her in this ſituation.—It was in vain to oppoſe him; and they all went back again, to tell her ladyſhip what was the reſolution of Montague, and to give him time to put on his clothes.

What have you done, Emeline, with the Chronologer I gave you when you went from hence? ſaid Sir William—may I hope it has been ſanctified to my memory?

Was there ever ſuch a queſtion? Can you ſuppoſe that I have not taken care to preſerve the gift you gave me?

My dear Emeline! let me look at it for a moment.

That, I believe, ſaid Mrs. Davenport, with ſome meaning in a glance ſhe directed to her daughter, ſhe is not juſt now inclined to do.

Not ſhew it, Madam!—his eyes kindled at the flaſh of his own imagination; and why ſhould ſhe not ſhew it me, unleſs ſhe has loſt it or given it away?

Neither, upon my word, cried Emeline: ſome other time you ſhall ſee it, but not now.

Sir William ſeemed only half ſatisfied; and Lady Gertrude ſtarting from her ſeat, ſeeing Mr. Davenport, ſupported by two ſervants, coming in at the door, cried out, as ſhe walked towards him with extended arms, Come to thy mother's embrace, Montague, my dear ſon!—my beloved Montague! —The ſervants quitted their hold, as ſhe threw her arms round him.—He looked as if this had been the awful criſis of his fate; his face was the very image of death; large drops of cold ſweat inſtantaneouſly burſt from every pore:—he looked ardently on Lady Gertrude, but not as if he could diſcern her—his lips moved, but he ſaid nothing. Every body buſied themſelves in reſtoring him, and at laſt ſucceeded as far as regarded ſenſe and motion; it was a much longer time before his reaſoning faculties or his ſpeech could

could be recalled; and the firſt uſe he made of them was to ſink down at the feet of Lady Gertrude.

In pity to what ſhe had ſeen him ſuffer, ſo infinitely beyond the moſt gloomy of her own repreſentations, ſhe permitted herſelf to be almoſt ſtrangled with her emotions in trying to ſmother them, that he might not have more to contend with than his own conflicts.—Montague was equally guarded: he had received his leſſon from Sir William;—and when on his knees he thanked the mother of Adelaide for all her goodneſs to him and his family, the name of Adelaide did not paſs his lips, though her image fluttered in his ſoul—fleeted before his viſion—wound itſelf round the fibres of his brain;—yet did not his cautious lips once open a paſſage to what his tongue eagerly trembled to announce—the name of Adelaide.

Those who next to Lady Gertrude and Montague were concerned in this dreaded interview rejoiced when it was over, and particularly at the reſolution each of the parties exerted on the trying occaſion: nor did the ſun go down ſo heavy on any of their woes that night as it had done many preceding ones.—The little party would not be divided, and they all dined together in the ſame room where they had breakfaſted; though Lady Gertrude, on the pretence that both ſhe and Montague were invalids, propoſed, for the accommodation of her other friends, that, for a day or two, they might divide into a *trio*

and

and *tête à-tête*, uniting again immediately after dinner.—To have left her ladyſhip and Montague together would have been the worſt of all poſſible aſſociations—of courſe was not ſupported.

THE mental powers of Mrs. Davenport were not confined to ſituations: ſhe could uſe them on all occaſions with equal ſucceſs.—Her converſation was of that facinating kind which delights the mind without fatiguing the attention. How ſeldom is it that women of a certain age, who love to hear themſelves ſpeak, can ever find out when their hearers have had enough of it? Mrs. Davenport was certainly no friend to ſilence; nor did any body that ever heard her ſpeak wiſh her to be ſilent. She poſſeſſed a ſtill more valuable art than that of merely pleaſing: it had ever been her forte to charm away prejudices that though innocent might be painful, and to plant in the ſpace they occupied a ſentiment more perfect: ſhe had never failed in this attempt but once—it was when ſhe contended with the rooted ſorrow of Montague: ſhe had better hopes of Lady Gertrude; for though the keen edge of her grief was not yet taken off, her reaſon was more matured, and her paſſions leſs violent than Montague's.—She would have ſaid to the one, You will be comforted, becauſe it is your duty to be comforted;—and to the other, Time muſt be your phyſician.

ALL that day Sir William ſcarcely looked at any thing but Emeline, or thought of any thing but the Chronologer.—He turned over a hundred times in his

his memory the hint dropped by her mother; and the glance that attended it when he aſked her to ſhew it to him—*That* I believe ſhe is not juſt now inclined to do.—What could theſe words mean?—What could that glance pretend?—In ſhort, no lover ever aſked himſelf more queſtions, or leſs to the purpoſe, than he did about this Cronologer.

When Montague retired for the night, which was at an early hour, being yet extremely feeble, he was ſupported by Sir William and his ſiſter; ſhe would have taken her leave at the door of his chamber; but ſeizing her hand, You ſhall not go back, Emeline, ſaid her lover, till you have heard me aſk your brother one queſtion.—She broke from his hold, and laughing, ran away as faſt as ſhe could, but turned back to tell him ſhe knew well enough what he wanted to ſay, and would not ſtay at the exhibition of her own folly.

Something diſturbs you, William, ſaid Montague.—Have you any reaſon to be diſpleaſed with my ſiſter?

No—not to be diſpleaſed!—and yet—No, no; it is a mere jeſt—I am not offended.—But can you tell me, Montague, what ſhe has done with the Chronologer I gave her at parting?

Done with it! why ſhe has it in her own poſſeſſion.

I think

I THINK you are miſtaken: I aſked her this day to let me look at it; and was refuſed by your mother as well as Emeline herſelf.

SUPPOSE ſhe wears it on her heart, how could ſhe ſhew it you at the moment you aſked to ſee it?

I WISH I could think as you do: but the bauble had no ſetting—how then can ſhe wear it?

LOVE, ſaid he, deeply ſighing, is an ingenious artiſt: it has taught her to pierce through the hardeſt of metals; and your gift now hangs ſuſpended from the black ribbon that encircles her neck.

DIVINE Emeline! exclaimed the tranſported lover; if this be true, I ſhall adore thy ſenſibility more than I do all thy other and infinite charms.

NOTHING is more true, replied Montague in diſpirited accents; and then added in a voice hardly articulate, Oh William! ſpare theſe praiſes, ſpare theſe happy, happy raptures! There is in wretchedneſs, from which hope is exploded, ſomething that too nearly reſembles the poiſon of envy. Goodnight, my dear friend; I begin to feel the venom gliding through my veins. I will for ever hug the ſhadow of my departed joys, and pray that the ſubſtance of yours may not be taken from you.—But this day—this firſt day—Good God! the contraſt has been inſupportable.

SIR WILLIAM was ſhocked at this new proof of Montague's deſpondency; and not being able to give him any ſort of conſolation, he accepted his adieus, and tenderly returned them—and went to renew his good-humour, his vivacity, and his tranſports, at the modeſt and love-inſpiring eyes of her to whom his whole ardent ſoul was devoted.

CHAP. XII.

Dates and ſeaſons—Family ſituations—Another ſon of the church—The monument—Superſtition the growth of ignorance—Speculative felicity—The bluſh—Unreaſonable interruption—Curioſity angling for food—A letter begun—the reader nonplus'd.

DECEMBER paſſed away—January had nearly run its race—Sir William was happy—Emeline enchanting—Mrs. Davenport perſuaſive, and Lady Gertrude ſtealing from privacy thoſe precious moments of indulgence which grief, the ſolitary companion of her boſom, could no longer claim as its own, ſince ennui had been baniſhed from the caſtle by a reinforcement to the family ſociety.

DOCTOR Buſby, from the time of Mr. Armatage's ſudden removal, had ſupplied the church of Worthenton: he reſided at the parſonage—often attended Lady Gertrude, and was much eſteemed by Sir William. If any other neighbour could have

reconciled

reconciled them to the abſence of their old friends, this ſucceſſor would have been the very perſon: but it was impoſſible they ſhould not be anxious to ſee again their kind intimates and avowed favourites, of whom no tidings had been received ſince their departure.

Sir William ordered from town a very fine monument to be placed near the vault where the remains of his ſiſter were interred, and had requeſted the favour of Doctor Buſby to give directions in putting it up, and on the twenty-ſeventh of January he called to tell him the work was finiſhed.

It was a clear froſty morning; Sir William and Emeline were walking on the terrace, and went to meet the Doctor as he came towards them: they would have turned back with him, but he choſe to continue his walk with them.

Having talked low to Sir William on the buſineſs he came about, he ſaid in his uſual voice, Have you heard the fooliſh reports that are circulating through the country, of lanthorns, ghoſts, and hobgoblins?

I have heard nothing of them, ſaid he—Nor I, rejoined Emeline with particular energy; but I ſhould like of all things to be better inſtructed. Pray, Sir, do tell me all about it.

That is impoſſible, Madam, replied the Doctor; for there are more ſtories related than I ſhould be

able

able to repeat from ſun-riſing to ſun-ſetting, the longeſt day in ſummer.—I have had four of your pariſhioners come to me this morning, with thirty followers, all as credulous as themſelves, to ſwear that they have ſeen the lanthorn and the ghoſt: but I ſent them away, telling them I did not trade in oaths, or grant the ignorant to take the ſacred teſt on frivolous occaſions; when one of them bolder and more exaſperated than the reſt, told me I was not half a juſtice.

The old gentleman laughed heartily at the fall of his importance:—he was joined by Sir William; but Emeline was ſo impatient to hear more of the matter, that ſhe deſired her lover would ſend for all the parties concerned in it, and let her be preſent at their examination.—What is there that ſuch a lover can refuſe to ſuch a miſtreſs? Beſides, the Doctor thought he could not do a better thing than to call theſe deluded people into his preſence, and endeavour to ſtop the evil, before it was propagated paſt all hopes that it might be eradicated.—They love and they reverence you, ſaid he; and nobody is ſo likely as yourſelf to ſilence a cabal that is pregnant with miſchief, and threatens to deſtroy, amongſt the lower ranks of people, that peace and good order eſtabliſhed in your village.

Sir William, all condeſcenſion to the wiſhes of his divinity, who longed ſo much to ſee ſomebody who had ſeen a ghoſt, gave immediate orders that the

the whole ſecond-ſighted ſquad ſhould aſſemble at the caſtle the next morning at twelve o'clock. Doctor Buſby was invited to attend the meeting, but could not come, being obliged to go home, where he intended to ſtay till Saturday before he came back to the parſonage.

THE names and ſtations of the terrified tribe who had made an acquaintance with the ghoſt muſt not be omitted. Sir William took them down from the Doctor's own memorandum-book, where he had entered them, that Sir William might enquire into the buſineſs if he choſe to give himſelf the trouble.

TIMOTHY Tarniſh, the village-ſmith, and his wife Rebecca, had ſeen it.—Mary Darking, the village-baker, had ſeen it—and Martha Bradley, waſher-woman in general to the village, had alſo ſeen it.—One part of the rumour had not reached the Doctor, or, if it had, he would have ſuppreſſed it in his information; for theſe ignorant ſouls ſpread it about amongſt themſelves, that this ghoſt was certainly raiſed by the noiſe the maſons were making with their hammers near the tomb of Miſs Montreville, which had certainly diſturbed her aſhes, and that ſhe had walked out of her grave to ſee what they were about.

DOCTOR Buſby had ordered his horſes to meet him, and mounted at the caſtle gates, leaving his new friends and neighbourhood, for a few days, to viſit

his

his old friends and his old neighbours in the reſidence he quitted to take up his abode in the pariſh of Worthenton.

EMELINE and Sir William continued their walk, occupied by a thouſand fond plans of future felicity, which though recogniſed and talked over every day, almoſt every hour, the ſubject loſt none of its novelty, and was not at all the worſe for wear.

SIR William was preſſing Miſs Davenport with the moſt paſſionate entreaties to ſhorten his paſſage to thoſe domeſtic delights of which they now talked, and of which they were for ever talking; and ſhe, with a bluſhing frankneſs, of which no ſituation could diveſt her, had aſſured him ſhe ſhould be obedient to his wiſhes and the will of Lady Gertrude; when a ſervant, who was gone to fetch the family letters from the next poſt-town, a part of his daily employment, returned with only one, which was for his maſter; and this he brought to him at the very critical moment I have been deſcribing.

SIR William would have put it into his pocket without even looking on the cover; but Emeline, who, it may have been obſerved by the inſtance of the lanthorn and ghoſt, was rather of a curious diſpoſition, did not like ſo manifeſt a proof that the man of her heart had leſs curioſity than herſelf; ſhe upbraided him with the imperfection of being too perfect—ſhe tempted him—and he was tempted. Looking at the ſuperſcription, he cried out, It is

from

from Armatage; but I wiſh it had come at any other time, ſince you inſiſt on my reading it at a moment when you are beginning to grow manageable.

To ſhew you that I always deſign to be manageable, ſhe replied, I will go to my mother and Lady Gertrude whilſt you are reading your letter; and when you have done ſo, you may come and tell us what the dear black gentleman has to ſay in excuſe for his long ſilence.

That ſhall not be, ſaid he; for I ſwear if you go away I will not ſtay behind, or ever ſeek a ſatisfaction when you are not preſent to ſhare it with me.

I only wanted your permiſſion to ſtay, ſhe returned, and ſhould have been diſappointed if you had not given me the invitation. Come, added ſhe, let me open this charming letter, and read it for our mutual inſtruction.

Do ſo, my love, ſaid Sir William; and throwing his arm round her, they continued ſtrolling in ſight of the windows, whilſt in a voice of confidence and harmony, ſhe gave him the whole contents of the long epiſtle which follows:

LETTER.

My dear Sir William,

Know that I am writing to you confidentially, and wiſh that what I have to communicate may be

ſuffered

ſuffered to remain between ourſelves, at leaſt for the preſent.

EMELINE ſtopped; Sir William deſired ſhe would proceed. How can I? ſaid ſhe. Nobody is to ſee it but yourſelf.—Well, he replied, you are that nobody; and the very deareſt part of myſelf. Her eyes ſparkled with a thouſand intelligent emotions, and were again caſt on the paper.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Reading recommenced—Modeſt defence—Modeſt reaſoning—And a modeſt requeſt—A tale begun—Retroſpection neceſſary—the tale purſued—Grows intereſting—Increaſes to extraordinary—Becomes more and more wonderful—One reader diſabled—Another fills the poſt.

EMELINE read on, without ſtopping to make any more obſervations.

Continuation of the Letter.

THE reaſon why I demand this ſecrecy on your part, will explain itſelf as you proceed in the very long narrative I am inclined to ſend you, not more as a proof of my friendſhip than to anſwer for the abruptneſs with which we left you, and our ſilence ſince that time, which muſt have appeared ungrateful and unaccountable.

THE diſtreſſes of that friend for whom I am engaged have been in many reſpects ſo like the diſtreſſes of your dear and reſpectable mother, that, if

I was

I was to make my communications to her, inſtead of making them to you, her faded griefs would grow green under the relation, and all her wounds, which may be now healing, opened to bleed afreſh.

It is many years ago that I contracted the moſt cloſe and endearing intimacy with a family as amiable as the Montrevilles, in whoſe fate my wife will have it there is as much ſimilarity as in their virtues. —The houſe too like your own is ancient and honourable; and its boaſt was a daughter of exquiſite perfection.—This lovely young creature was ſome time ſince ſpirited away from her tender relations, and at this preſent moment they are as unacquainted with her ſituation as you are; for though I have diſcovered where ſhe is—though I have ſeen her, and found her an angel of purity, to them I dare not unveil this proſpect of happineſs, leſt Death, jealous of their good fortune, ſhould obſtruct its nearer approach.—They are now beginning to reconcile themſelves to a worſe fate, becauſe they think that fate is inevitable; and, till I know whether my poor patient is to live or die, it would be barbarous to rob them of a compoſure they have been ſo long in acquiring.

The laſt time my wife was at the caſtle, in her abſence a letter came to my hand that gave me a clue to the very ſpot where the intended victim to the moſt inſatiate of baſe paſſions was confined, in a foreign, deſolated, almoſt ſavage country. The goodneſs of my wife's heart is not unknown to you.

I ſee:

I ſent for her whilſt ſhe was yet with Lady Gertrude.—I ſhewed her my credentials.—I told her my intentions of going to ſearch out this hidden treaſure—I aſked her advice, whether it would be moſt for the eaſe of the young lady's family that they ſhould be conſulted, for it was not very far out of our way if we had called upon them; or that we ſhould be ſilent on the whole matter till we ſaw the event of our undertaking. She was decidedly for the latter caution; and advanced ſuch arguments in ſupport of her opinion, as I have been retailing as my own, though to her diſcretion I owe the foundation of all my reaſoning with you on the motives of that ſecrecy, which only from the tendereſt commiſeration to the peace of a whole family, once deeply afflicted, now emerging out of their affliction, could be defended.

You may tell me theſe reaſons did not extend to my friends at the caſtle—Why had I not told them the extraordinary cauſe which hurried us away with ſo much preeipitancy? Ah, Sir William! I repeat to you, that there are ſome circumſtances attending this tale of woe, that would have harrowed up the ſoul of Lady Gertrude; your own is alſo compoſed of too great ſuſceptibility for me to make you, at that ſeaſon of ſorrow, the confidant of an expedition that threatened us with a thouſand dangers to our perſonal ſafety. By our flight we ſaved you from partaking, through the powers of ſympathy, in the diſtreſſes of our peregrinations, and thoſe of the miſerable being to whoſe aſſiſtance we were flying.

LIKE St. Paul, we paſſed through perils by ſea and perils by land; and the ſame Divine Power brought us equally out of them all, and crowned our miſſion with ſucceſs. The particulars of our diſaſters muſt be deferred till we meet. I have neither time nor inclination to repeat them now. Had my wife taken up the pen inſtead of me, ſhe would have had no objection, perhaps, to departing from the great buſineſs of the drama. Women, I believe, delight to dabble in epiſode; but I, who am the worſt hiſtorian that can be, ſhall abide by the main point, to get off my hands with all convenient ſpeed a pathetic tale, which, though ſtrictly true, bears on its face what would be called too ſtrong impreſſions of the marvelous for faith itſelf to credit; but you know the relater, and will not doubt his veracity.

To a country ſurrounded by mountains, fit only for the reſidence of wolves and tygers, were our ſteps directed, and through regions of trackleſs ſnow we, at laſt, with much toil, reached the object of our purſuit.—It was one poor ſolitary miſerable hut; the neareſt dwelling to it a ſmall dirty dreary hamlet, at the diſtance of ſix miles, each of which with us would have been counted two. At this laſt aſſemblage of wretchedneſs, honoured by its ignorant almoſt ſavage inhabitants with the name of a town, we were forced to wait many hours to refreſh our cattle; our impatience to get forward not animating them to perform miracles. The time we were forced by neceſſity to paſs amongſt theſe people, was not entirely loſt. I made them comprehend

where

where I knew my journey was to end for the preſent; and not only obtained a guide to the place, but got ſome information of thoſe wolves who were charged with the guardianſhip of an innocent lamb, betrayed into their infernal den.

ENQUIRING for theſe wretches by name and abode, I found they were well known, and generally came once a week to the town to buy proviſions.—I aſked of what number their family conſiſted—A man, his wife, and his ſiſter, they ſaid.—Had they no young foreign female who lived with them?—Yes—there was ſuch a perſon, as they had heard, but nobody had ever ſeen her; becauſe ſhe was ſent there by her friends, to be cured of madneſs.—What ſort of people were thoſe who had taken the charge upon them?—A general ſhrug from all who heard me aſk the queſtion was the only anſwer I received; and with this we proceeded on our journey. Our party in the whole conſiſted of ſix perſons: my indefatigable wife, who exceeded us all in courage and perſeverance—myſelf—our man John—a good apothecary, whom we picked up on the road, to aid us with his ſkill and medicine if neceſſary—a keen-ſighted clever fellow, who had originally come out of the country to which we were going, hired for the journey—and a guide from the laſt town, without whoſe aſſiſtance it would have been impoſſible to have found our way through the accurſed and intricate road.

IT was only two hours paſt noon when our little cavalcade arrived at the foot of the moſt tremendous

mountain

mountain that ever was produced by the convulſion of nature. I have been myſelf, in my youth, through moſt European countries, and never ſaw any thing ſo hideous, ſo barren, and yet ſo majeſtic, as the ſituation of my dear child's priſon. We could not drive very near to it, but were forced to walk a hundred yards, ſinking every moment up to our knees in ſnow. At the door of the infernal abode, buried almoſt to its low roof in the ſame cold ſprinklings of the angry elements, ſtood the three wretches who had been deſcribed to me at the laſt village; and by their looks they ſeemed to be expecting us.

I HAD charged my pockets with two loaded piſtols, our companion of the faculty being as well provided, and John alſo was equally armed; but I did not think it prudent to truſt offenſive weapons with my newly hired ſervant, not knowing what uſe he might make of them, if ordered to turn them againſt his own country people.

I PUT myſelf at the head of my little army: Harriot held by my arm: and, ſtepping boldly up to the undaunted wretches, I commanded them, on peril of their lives, to produce the young lady, whom they retained as their priſoner.——

EMELINE Davenport, whoſe voice had faultered almoſt from the beginning of the taſk ſhe had undertaken to perform could read no further; her eyes were deluged in tears, and ſhe cried out, Finiſh it, Sir William, and tell me how it ends; for I cannot bear it.—Her ſobs frightened the tendereſt of lovers;

—he

—he would that moment have conſigned the tragical letter to everlaſting oblivion:—he ſaid every thing to calm her ſpirits:—he put her in mind that the firſt part ſeemed to promiſe a happy iſſue to the melancholy tale; at leaſt they might be ſure, from what Mr. Armatage had ſaid, that the young lady was at preſent under his own fatherly protection, and repoſing on the friendly boſom of his wife.

Oh! I thank you, ſhe cried, for waking me to recollection: I had forgot to look back upon theſe pleaſing lights; ſo pray go on, I am eager to hear more, though I can read no longer.

The paper was of immenſe ſize on which Mr. Armatage had written, and the words as cloſe and ſmall as pen could form them; ſo that much more than half this intereſting letter remained to be examined, and this Sir William would have deferred for her ſake, if ſhe had not violently oppoſed—a mortifying proof of his tenderneſs, which, in ſparing her heart, muſt torture her curioſity.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Letter continued—The preacher of peace—Threatening diſtraction—Hardineſs of vice—Heroiſm of virtue—The timely hint—The retirement—The conſultation—Cords, ropes, and halters—Holes, corners, and flambeaus—And the end of the letter.

I ORDER you to produce her, ſaid I, or I will lay you all dead at my feet. The ſcowling villain looked defiance at me; for though I threatened, my hands were empty; and he obſerved that they were. Whilſt the two female harpies ſupported him in his ſullen audacity by their own example, I repeated my queſtion with a piſtol in each hand: this menace produced its effect: they were no longer ſternly ſilent, but every one of them at once vociferated that the young perſon I enquired for, who was a maniac, had been dead more than three months.—I did not believe a word of this ſtory; and on their perſiſting in it, I bade them ſhew me where they had

had laid the body.—They ſaid it was gone where all heretics ought to go—they had thrown it over the precipice.

We now ſurrounded them with a brace of piſtols at the head of each, in hopes the terrors of immediate death would have frightened them into confeſſion; and thus hemmed in on all ſides, we drove them before us into the miſerable cabin, every inch of which was ſearched, but no lady was there; neither could her reſidence amongſt theſe agents of the devil be diſcovered by wearing apparel, or any other token.

My wife was now in deſpair, and I not very far from it, when I ſaw that even the fear of puniſhment made no laſting impreſſion on their callous hearts; but that, on the contrary, they every moment increaſed in hardineſs, and actually ſeemed to have determined on laying down their lives, rather than giving up their crimes. As I ſtood undetermined what courſe I ſhould take next, their countryman, who now acted as my ſervant, plucked me by the ſleeve; I turned round, and ſaw the guide beckon me alſo. I felt a gleam of hope from this motion of theirs, and followed them outſide of the door, leaving guards enough to ſecure my priſoners: but my wife, who did not think herſelf ſafe unleſs under my protection, went with me.

The guide, who had never heard of the ſtranger's death, though he often ſaw one or other of her

gaolers when they went to buy proviſions, had been talking to my ſervant of his want of faith in the ſtory they had been telling me—particularly as no man was ever remembered to have ventured up to the top of that precipice over which they pretended to have thrown the body. Theſe two honeſt fellows then conſulted what they could have done with the lady, whom they muſt have conveyed away, and hid ſomewhere or other. The guide ſaid to his countryman, that this being the day on which one of the women always came to their market-town, he ſuppoſed ſhe had heard ſome intelligence of the buſineſs we were upon, and had reached home time enough to hide the lady, before we came to claim her: they afterwards conſulted together where it was probable they might find her, either dead or alive; and both being well verſed in the ſituation of the place, they agreed to ſpeak to me on the ſubject, and to tell me, that it was well known, that in the bowels of the mountains were many caverns, ſome of them ſo large that a thouſand men may be diſpoſed of within them.

As ſoon as I had received this information, I demanded if they could provide me with ſtrong cords. There were none to be got in that place, they ſaid; but that if they might take them off from about the harneſs of the horſes, they would provide us with others for that uſe by the next morning. It was a lucky expedient; I thanked them, and inſtantly had as many ropes as I wanted. I then bade my new

allies follow me into the cabin, where I found the enemy as ſulky and as refractory as ever.

I RESUMED my former poſition, and with both piſtols pointed at the head of the man-ſavage, I ordered John to fire his into the air, and then aſſiſt the other two men to ſecure and bind our priſoners. All this time the Doctor kept guard over the female wretches. Our taſk was accompliſhed without difficulty; for ſeeing it in vain to contend, they all ſuffered themſelves to be bound very quietly; but nothing could wring from them a ſingle word of which we might have made advantage—only one of the horrid monſters ſaid that it was their duty to perſevere, let what would come of it.

HAVING placed them at ſuch a diſtance that it was impoſſible they ſhould ſpeak to one another (for in this wretched ſtye there were many rambling apartments), I ſummoned our little army to a council of war, at which my heroic wife preſided. She propoſed, and we all agreed to the propoſition, that as long as it continued light, we ſhould each go a different way, except that herſelf would be the partner of my ſearch; and that every cavity in that part of the mountain neareſt the hut ſhould be diſcovered, and the way to it marked down, ſo that we might know where to find it again. When our torches were lighted, of which I had many yet remaining in my carriage, having uſed them on the journey for our ſafety in travelling by night—when we were

about to ſeparate on this forlorn purſuit, I ſaid to the three men, I mean to pay you all in proportion to your diligence; but he who brings me the firſt tidings of the lady, a hundred pounds ſhall be his reward. I ſpecified this ſum in the currency of their own country; and to this fortunate thought of mine, I verily believe, we are indebted for the recovery of our loſt angel.

The caverns we ſearched that night, making them ring with the name of her whom we ſuppoſed to be ſecreted, were innumerable; till ſinking under our weight of diſappointment, and fainting with fatigue, my wife, the good Doctor, whoſe friend I am for life, and I, were forced to give out, whilſt my three honeſt adherents—two of them with a view to the reward, and one from the love he bore his maſter and miſtreſs—continued the ſearch.

It was two o'clock by my watch. The Doctor had fallen aſleep in his chair. Harriot was weeping, and her head reſted on my ſhoulder.—The moſt profound ſilence reigned within and without; for my part I was dumb, becauſe I had nothing to ſay that would cheer or comfort her. I was buſied in thought, and ſo abſent, that I ſhould not have heard a little noiſe, and the ſound of low voices juſt outſide of the door, if ſhe had not ſtarted, and cried out in a tone between expectation and terror, Hark!—I liſtened, and heard them diſtinctly:—It is certainly our men returned, ſaid I, and haſtened to open the door;

door; when the firſt object I beheld was my foreign ſervant and the guide, bearing between them the beautiful victim—apparently dead.—I caught her in my arms—my wife ſcreamed—the Doctor ſtarted on his feet, and gave a ſtrong acclamation of joy in his own language, on finding that her pulſe, though extremely low, had not entirely forſaken her. He bade us be of good cheer, for that ſhe would yet do well. Theſe few words revived the heart of my poor half-diſtracted Harriot. She aſſiſted the Doctor in all his operations; which in one quarter of an hour were attended with every ſucceſs that could be hoped for.—But, oh, Sir William! I will ſpare you a repetition of the torturing delight we all experienced when the dear creature, whom the Almighty had thus raiſed out of the grave, ſaw, knew, and acknowledged her deliverers.

We are ſtill in the clouds, that is to ſay, amongſt the higheſt mountains in the world: but now that our darling charge is pronounced capable of beginning the journey, we ſhall ſet out for her country, and our own, in a few days; as her impatience to be re-united to her family is beyond all deſcription I have written a long letter, yet not told you half the hiſtory. Soon you ſhall hear from me again. We mean to ſend home honeſt John immediately:—he will tell you in what a ſituation the dear young lady was diſcovered; and how we diſpoſed of our priſoners during the time her weakneſs detained us at the cabin.—Theſe are ſubjects on which I have neither time, patience, nor paper to expatiate. My

preſent letter he carries with him part of his journey, to a place where he will be detained a few days on the Doctor's buſineſs, who is ſo intereſted for his lovely invalid, that, though her health is now nearly re-eſtabliſhed, he will not give up his attendance till he has ſeen her ſafe in the arms of her friends; who, as ſoon as they know ſhe is found, will amply recompenſe the worthy man for his trouble, his ſkill, and his humanity.

I AM ſo little uſed to theſe ſort of details, that it has taken me up five days to complete the little ſketch of our ſituation I now ſend you. When I began it, the beloved child of my friends—the darling object of our care, was in no certain ſtate of recovery; but, bleſſed be the mercies of that Almighty diſpenſer of events, who watcheth over the ſafety of oppreſſed innocence, and bringeth good out of evil, to ſave the humble and meek from the hands of their enemies—Reverent and holy is his name, who, day by day, ſince I firſt took up my pen, has renewed this fading flower with ſtrength and beauty.—And now the hour approaches when I ſhall unfold this marvelous preſervation to the ſuffering relatives of the intereſting ſufferer: their names I conceal even from you, that by no chance this burthen of joy might fall upon them before they are ſtrengthened to ſuſtain it. That fortune is beſt aſcertained which does not ſhrink under the preſſure of unexpected happineſs:—adverſity may be more painful to bear, but it is leſs difficult. I would have this ſurpriſing

event not break boiſterouſly like the weaves of the ocean over the broken reed, deluging what it might preſerve, but rather that the exquiſite delight, for which her friends are deſtined, ſhould ſteal upon their minds like the ſilver ſtream that meanders quietly through the famiſhed graſs, imperceptibly refreſhing the roots, from which operation alone the return of verdure is expected.

REMEMBER, my good friend, that what I have confided to you as the beſt excuſe I could make for an apparent breach of candour and gratitude, on which ſcore you muſt ſurely have condemned me:—remember, I ſay, that this apology goes no further, at leaſt for the preſent, than to your own heart;—there let it lie till my charge is reſtored to her family, then tell it to as many as you pleaſe; for I ſhall afterwards have no further demands on your ſilence. Having yet a few inches of paper unfilled, and knowing from ſelf-experience that curioſity is a weakneſs not entirely confined to one ſex, I ſhall make the beſt uſe of it I can for the relief of yours; becauſe in my own mind I am convinced a heart like yours will be deeply engaged by the wonderful myſtery into which I have only begun to initiate you.—It is neceſſary to your better comprehending the whole, that you ſhould know of many tranſactions which happened prior to our vaniſhing out of your ſight; particularly, how I came poſſeſſed of the intelligence that carried me from you. Nothing of this can be done on the half inch to which my materials are now reduced; however you have a key to the whole in your keeping,

and

and you have not only my conſent but earneſt requeſt that you will make uſe of it the moment you hear my man John is arrived at the parſonage, but not before: my reaſon for this embargo you will know hereafter. The key to which I refer you is the ſame that was delivered to you on the morning I went from Worthenton. You know the cabinet that ſtands in my ſmall library; try it on the third drawer, the lock will acknowledge its old acquaintance, and the drawer will unfold to you a great deal of entertaining matter for further ſpeculation; farewell, my excellent young friend! I ſay nothing to any body but yourſelf, becauſe it is yourſelf only with whom I intruſt my ſecret.

As ſoon as Sir William came to the concluſion, Emeline, whoſe ſpirits returned with the certainty of the young lady's reprieve from danger and death, entreated him with ardour, that when the time came to open this delightful drawer with impunity, he would not go on that errand to the parſonage without her.—I have heard ſo much of it, ſhe cried, that I ſhall die if I do not hear all. If there is any man in the world who would have refuſed ſuch a requeſt, that man was not a lover half ſo paſſionate as Sir William Montreville.

CHAP. XV.

The dinner-bell—Conqueſt of ſenſe over prejudice—Extraordinary magnet—The ſtolen banquet—Swollen eyes accounted for—A man of honour plunging on rotten ground, and ſinking deeper and deeper, not knowing how to find his way out—Feeding doves, ſometimes extremely convenient.

THEIR conference was interrupted by the laſt bell ringing for dinner. Sir William carefully put up his letter—drew Emeline's arm through his, when, with hearts at eaſe—with faces animated by love, pleaſure, and good-humour, they made haſte to obey the ſummons.

MRS. Davenport always had it in view to prevail on Lady Gertrude, either to viſit the apartments which contained pictures or mementos of her late daughter, otherwiſe to have them removed out of her ſight; for as long as ſhe confined herſelf to one ſolitary part of the houſe, leſt her eyes ſhould encounter

counter them, this ſenſible friend ſaw no hopes that either her conſtitution or ſpirits would receive any permanent advantage from time or ſociety: ſhe had the ſame opinion in regard to her ſon, who would never ſtir from the ſide of Lady Gertrude if he could help it; and this was another motive for her not to deſiſt from the difficult undertaking till ſhe had carried her point, in a manner too, moſt ſatisfactory to her own reaſon and her own wiſhes—not by baniſhing the portraits of Miſs Montreville, but by gently drawing on the mother and the lover to behold them without horror: this had not been the work of a day, but was at laſt finally accompliſhed.

As MONTAGUE's health grew better, his ſpirits, if poſſible, had grown worſe; yet he did not want the art to conceal this from the whole family, who fondly watched every turn of his varying countenance, except Lady Gertrude: to her deception was unneceſſary; and the artifice which might have impoſed on her ſenſes would have been imputed to him as a crime.—They had a magnet for each other, which brought them together as often as the reſt of the party ſeparated to walk, to dreſs, or on any other avocation, which muſt occaſionally happen in every family.

AH! how precious were theſe ſhort dear moments to Lady Gertrude and her partner in unconcealed affliction!—It was then ſhe would lead him to her favourite window, and feed with him on the luxuries

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of melancholy, ſerved up at the tomb of their ever-lamented Adelaide. They called it the feaſt of ſouls; and would not allow that Deſpair was of the party, becauſe he came to the banquet diſguiſed like Conſolation.

THIS had been the ſituation of the two ſelf-deceivers whilſt Sir William and Emeline were walking on the terrace. Mrs. Davenport having ſome buſineſs to arrange in her own apartment, and thinking her ſon would not come out of his for an hour or two, ſhe left Lady Gertrude alone, without any conception that her ladyſhip would be joined by Montague before ſhe came back; but deſtiny very quickly brought them together.

WHAT has been the matter, my dear brother? ſaid Emeline, when they were all aſſembled round the dinner-table. Is your poor head diſordered? I have not ſeen your eyes appear ſo heavy for a long time: I cannot bear theſe head-achs; when they do attack you, it is with ſuch violence, that they always alarm me.

THERE is no foundation at preſent for any alarm, my kind ſiſter, he replied; and if my eyes make you believe it, do not credit them; for, did they ſpeak truth, they would tell you I am particularly well, and more than commonly ſatisfied.

I AM ready to be his voucher, ſaid Lady Gertrude: we have been together a long time this morning,

morning, and I have found Montague very good company; ſo, if he has any complaints, it is too late to tell you now, or I ſhall be angry that he did not intruſt me with them.—Though both tried to throw a great deal of cheerfulneſs into their faces, yet, when the acknowledgment was inadvertently made, that they had been much together, nobody aſked any more queſtions about the ſwollen eyes of Montague.

Sir William was interrogated by his mother, from whom he had received the letter that morning which ſhe had ſeen him reading as he walked on the terrace? Not being uſed to duplicity, he looked a little confuſed; and when a lie offered itſelf to his aid, he bluſhed a manly bluſh at being forced to adopt it, honour and falſehood having no alliance: but in this caſe the connection could not be avoided; for if, inſtead of ſaying as he did ſay, that the letter came from Lord Fitzhenry, he had told her the truth, and named Mr. Armatage, from whom they had ſo long and eagerly wiſhed to hear, there is no doubt ſhe would have thought it ſtrange not to ſee a letter, which he muſt know would give her ſo much pleaſure: and to make her the confidante of its contents, was what he could not think of doing.

Emeline, who was in the ſecret, and ſaw the dilemma this deviation from truth had plunged him into, would have felt a great deal more ſympathy for his diſtreſs, had not the thouſand natural queſ-

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tions that followed, both from Lady Gertrude and her mother, found ample employment for her talents, in managing and keeping her own lively countenance under ſubjection, being ready to die with laughing, to ſee how he hobbled out of the ſhifts to which he was driven; for ſuch is the nature of lies, be they white or black, that one introduces many; and before the cloth was removed, Sir William had told more than a ſcore, by accounting at random for all the motions of the whole Uxington family.

THE ſervants withdrawn, and the ſubject left behind, Sir William contrived to give it ſuch a turn as ſent Emeline out of the room, covered with as deep, though much more delicate bluſhes, than thoſe which had ſo lately ſtarted into the cheeks of her lover.—Fitzhenry and I, ſaid he, are ſuch tried friends, that nothing but affinity can draw us nearer to each other, and that tie I hope is at no great diſtance.

EMELINE, though far from proud, felt the whole tendency of this leading obſervation, and trembling for her preſent ſituation, haſtily changed it, ſaying, before he had ventured too far for her to withdraw unnoticed, ſhe had forgot to feed her doves, and that they would certainly ſtarve if ſhe did not go immediately and give them their dinner. Whether ſhe was moſt pleaſed, or moſt confuſed, is a queſtion not eaſily determined, even by her own confeſſion, when, as Lady Montreville, I aſked it of her as an embelliſhment of the hiſtory.

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HER abſence was not a long one. Sir William ſoon hurried through the material part of his buſineſs;—got their marriage fixed for that day month; and on the electrical wings of tranſport, flew to bring his elected bride back, to receive the congratulations of the few tender friends who were impatient to beſtow them: they bleſſed, they embraced, but did not oppreſs her. Sir William having obſerved that the lovely character of her countenance had retained a more ſerious expreſſion than belonged to it, he ceaſed to talk of his approaching happineſs: he entertained Lady Gertrude and Mrs. Davenport with the viſit they had that morning received *al freſco* from Doctor Buſby: this exactly led to the ſtory of the ghoſt and the lanthorn, which led to other ſtories foreign to that ſubject of which ſhe was moſt afraid.—Marriage and love had nothing to do with lanthorns and hobgoblins: her fears vaniſhed; her vivacity returned; and before they ſeparated it was agreed that the whole party ſhould meet the next morning in Sir William's library, to hear the hiſtory of the ghoſt from the mouths of thoſe harmleſs villagers, who had worked themſelves up to the monſtrous imagination of having ſeen one. Lady Gertrude afterwards got excuſed from her part of the engagement; the reſt kept it punctually.

INSTEAD of finiſhing the preſent chapter with the beginning of a ſubject ſo important, I ſhall rather conclude it by telling you, that before the hour arrived for their aſſembling to examine into ſupernatural cauſes, Sir William had diſpatched letters to

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the Uxington family, announcing his intended nuptials, and to beſpeak their preſence at the celebration of them. Theſe letters were very ſhort.—Emeline did not ſit at his elbow whilſt he was writing: even to his friend Fitzhenry he only afforded ſix lines; but there are ſome people who expreſs more ſenſe in ſix lines than others can convey in ſixty times ſixty.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Powers of imagination fully exemplified in the hiſtory of a ghoſt—Fear importunate—Humanity victorious—Maternal caution—The mourner's reſource—An old woman's dream—The Montreville Arms—The landlady—The key—and the pot of porter.

TIMOTHY Tarniſh, Rebecca his wife, Mary Darking, and Martha Bradley, arrived at the caſtle gates preciſely at the time they had been ordered to attend. Sir William with his ſelect party were ready to receive them. From the windows they ſaw a great multitude that followed the ſteps of theſe expected wonder-ſeeing gueſts, but who approached no further than the avenue, waiting there for the return of their companions. With much earneſtneſs Miſs Davenport moved for their immediate admittance. Sir William had no will but hers; and in a moment they were brought into her preſence.

FIRST entered the ſmith, his leathern apron tucked up on one ſide, his face and hands as black as

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can be ſuppoſed; his broad mouth and grey eyes fully extended; his wife followed after him; the baker came next, and the waſher-woman brought up the rear. Rebecca ſtood ſo cloſe to Timothy, and both modeſtly fearful of coming forwards, ſo blocked up the door, that the other two would have had no chance of ſhewing themſelves, but for the interference of Sir William, who, feeling that he had no right to lord it over his innocent unoffending dependants, bade them approach, in a tone ſo mild and affable, as baniſhed much of their humble fears, if it did not ſet them free from conſtraint.

His firſt queſtions were addreſſed to the ſmith: he called upon him to relate what appearances had diſturbed his imagination? when he ſaw them? at what place he ſaw them? and in what manner he ſaw them? Timothy grew into ſelf-conſequence, which ſpread in ſome degree its influence on his wife, the baker, and the waſher-woman, whoſe turn they were ſure it would next be to entertain and ſurpriſe his honour with what they had ſeen alſo.

The ſmith ſaid, that on the 20th day of the preſent month, he was ſent for by farmer Thomas to repair one of his waggons before it could be loaded with corn for the market; that after he had finiſhed the job, he helped the farmer to load; ſo that by the time he had eat a bit of ſupper, and drank a cup or two of beer, it was paſt midnight; ſo my wife,

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an't pleaſe your honour, ſaid he, come to light me home; for if I ſtays at any time a little longer than common, ſhe fears I have got a drop too much; and I ſcorn to deny to your honour's face, or to the face of all the folks preſent, that I have been overtaken before now—the worſe my luck.

At this honeſt confeſſion his wife gave her head a ſignificant ſhake, and his neighbours looked upon one another as if they would have ſaid, I wonder he is not aſhamed to expoſe himſelf.

Perhaps, Timothy, ſaid Sir William, you were overtaken when you fancied you ſaw the ghoſt?

No, no, your honour, I was as freſh then as the wind of my own bellows—here's my dame for once in her life will anſwer for me, that when ſhe and I ſaw it in the church-yard, I was as ſober as your honour.

Be'ant you aſhamed, cried Rebecca, to make ſuch an odious compariſon, and for to compare yourſelf to his honour? curtſeying very low to Sir William, as an atonement for her huſband's boldneſs;—and yet I cannot but ſay, though I *ſeltimes* can ſay it, that the ghoſt his ownſelf was not more *ſoberer* than my Timothy when we met him as we *comed* home together from farmer Thomas's.

Yes, an't pleaſe your honour, ſaid Timothy, my wife is a very diſcerning woman; and as ſhe tells

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your worſhip, we were jogging along together after I had done my work at the farmer's; but when we comed *nearſt* the ſtile leading into Rook's ground, her candle went clear out of the lanthorn; ſo we were left to ſcramble our way along in a pitchy dark night, when there was no more light in the ſky than is in my forge before I have made up the fire.—By and bye, ſomehow or other, we ſtumbled into maſter Brown's orchard, and *knowed* whereabouts we was, by running our heads againſt the apple-trees; and this brought us into the church yard, where it is a mercy we did not fall down dead; for it ſeemed to us as if the church had *bin* on fire, there was ſuch a vaſt big light comed out at the windows.

As big as the moon, and bigger, *waſent* it, huſband? cried his wife, with terror ſtrongly marked on her countenance—I do believe, your honour, it was ten times as big as the moon, *waſent* it, Timothy?

Poh, poh, don't you ſay no more about it, he replied;—what ſignifies, woman, how big it was? you knows well enough I waſent affeard of it.—I no more thought at firſt that it was a ghoſt than I did of my being worth a thouſand pounds a year; or I don't ſay I ſhould have been fool-hardy enough to have clambered up to look in at the window.

Dear! ſaid Emeline, you had a great deal of courage, Sir.

Courage! Miſs, no, not much courage neither; a ſmith has no buſineſs with courage, except juſt to

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ſhoe a horſe:—however, I thought there was church-robbers in the caſe, and that his honour and all the beſt of the pariſh would have *bin* vexed when the fine things was ſtolen out of the church-coffer; ſo if I had ſawed any body about that-there buſineſs, I ſhould not have ſtaid to be knocked down by the rogues, but have carried the news to his honour.

I THANK you, friend, ſaid Sir William; you are a very honeſt fellow, and no boaſter.—But what did you ſee when you looked in at the windows?

NOTHING, and pleaſe your honour.

NOTHING! repeated he.—What then became of the ghoſt?

WHY, your honour, that is the ſtrangeſt thing of all; for I was no ſooner upon Betty Staple's tomb-ſtone, than my wife catched hold of my coat, and pulled me back again, ſqualling as if ſhe had *beed* mazed, becauſe, whilſt I was gitting up, ſhe had ſawed the ghoſt come out at the top of the church, all in white, and vomitting flames of fire;—I ſawed it too when I got down, as plain as I now ſee your honour; and I do think, if your honour do not order the parſon to lay it in the Red Sea, there will be no biding in the pariſh for us poor folks, who can't now get no ſleep till daylight comes, when we ſhould be riſing up to our labour: ſo not to loſe the beſt of our time, we ſets up every night in company together, and club for candles that the ghoſt may not

catch

catch us in the dark; for as long as it is light, every chriſtian can defend himſelf, but evil ſpirits are always maſters in the dark.

Sir William perceived the evil ſpirit of ſuperſtition had taken too firm a root in their minds to be eaſily eradicated:—he alſo began to imagine that a robbery of the church was meditated, and that theſe poor terrified creatures might have their alarming fears founded on real and natural cauſes, which he was determined they ſhould be convinced of by proofs rather than reaſoning:—he whiſpered his intentions to Mrs. Davenport and Emeline, but let them go no further till he had examined the other two women.—Montague had ſtolen out of the room: he had flown to Lady Gertrude, and returned no more.

Mary Darking ſaid, that three mornings back, ſhe got up at two o'clock, to come home and look after her buſineſs, which ſhe had left to the care of her nephew, to go and attend her ſick mother; for that reaſon ſhe did not know any thing about the ghoſt, otherwiſe ſhe would not have croſſed the church-yard at that time in the morning for the king's crown:—ſhe did not obſerve any thing ſo big as a moon, or any light at all in the buildings; but the ghoſt ſtarted up juſt before her, and had almoſt tumbled over one of the graves in its haſte to vaniſh.—It looked for all the world like a Jack-o'-the-lanthorn, and the longer it ſtayed the taller it grew: it was all in white, and at laſt ſeemed to be as high

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as

as the tower; what became of it afterwards ſhe could give no account.

It was now the turn of Martha Bradly to declare what ſhe had ſeen.—Five days ago, ſhe ſaid, going to waſh for a neighbour, who always expected ſhe ſhould be at her work by one o'clock in the morning; and having heard much talk of the ghoſt, ſhe went half a mile about to avoid the church-yard, where ſhe was ſure ſhe muſt meet it;—and never having ſeen any thing worſe than herſelf in all her life, had it been two miles, ſhe would not have minded it.—But it was all one for that, ſhe morally obſerved, whatever is appointed muſt happen; and ſo, accordingly, as ſhe came into a narrow lane, the ghoſt came in alſo, and walked behind her, in a flame of fire, that made it as light as day:—ſhe ran away as faſt as ſhe could; and ſoon after, paſſing by the Montreville arms, being near enough to call out for help, if it ſhould have any thing to ſay to her, ſhe ſaw it again, growing leſs and leſs, till it ſunk into the earth, juſt at the very door of the public-houſe.

Sir William having liſtened with the moſt condeſcending attention to the deſcription of phantoms dreſſed up in a thouſand terrors by their own prolific imaginations, diſmiſſed them to the care of his butler, telling them, that as ſoon as they were refreſhed, he would ſee them again, and in the mean time conſider what could be done for their relief.

The haſty plan he had ſketched out, and as haſtily communicated to the beloved of his heart, and her ſenſible mother, now underwent a ſtricter ſcrutiny, and was at laſt finally adjuſted; though it was with much tender reluctance Emeline conſented to his propoſition of ſitting up all night in a cold church yard. At any other time, or on any other occaſion he would have ſubmitted to her gentle remonſtrances; but now, when the peace, the labour, perhaps the health of his vaſſals was at ſtake, the deareſt comforts of thoſe fellow-creatures threatened, who looked up to him as their only protector—he was refractory, and ſhe was forced to ſubmit.—My beſt love! ſaid he, it is the laſt time I will ever oppoſe your will. Ghoſt-hunting is not always in ſeaſon. The game that is ſtarted I muſt run down; but I promiſe you this is the laſt chaſe of a ſupernatural being I ſhall ever purſue.

Mrs. Davénport who dearly loved Sir William, though perhaps with leſs ardency than he was beloved by her charming daughter, felt none of thoſe apprehenſions, either for his health or perſonal ſafety, which had been ſo warmly and engagingly expreſſed by Emeline. On the contrary, her whole mind was ſo occupied by approbation, not only of the plan itſelf, but of the head and heart that ſuggeſted it, as to leave no room for doubts or fears of any kind to intrude themſelves.—One thing ſhe requeſted of him, to which he gladly aſſented—it was, that neither Lady Gertrude nor Montague ſhould be let into the ſecret of his midnight expedition.

tion. Your mother would be uneaſy, ſaid ſhe, from the ſame cauſe that has made Emeline a coward; and my ſon added ſhe—a ſigh heaving her maternal boſom—a tear ſtarting from her down caſt eye—my ſon, my ſtill miſerable ſon, from me he cannot diſguiſe his wretchedneſs:—he who has not yet ventured ſcarce to look at the walls which enſhrine his departed angel—he will ſurely inſiſt on going with you; and to viſit, for the firſt time, that ſepulchre where all his hopes lie buried, at ſuch an hour, and on ſuch an occaſion, will add horror to his gloom, and deſpair to his melancholy.

MISTAKEN mother! had thy Montague even gone with Sir William, it would not have been the firſt by many, many viſitations that he had made at the tomb of his miſtreſs.—No reader—often had Montague Davenport ſtolen from his pillow, to bedew with his tears that ſacred ſpot where lay the mouldring corpſe of Adelaide Montreville.——How could he do this, you aſk, without its being known to the family?—I will tell you how he contrived to manage it.

HE had no confidant but the ſexton's wife, and even ſhe was not entruſted with the whole of his purpoſe.—The ſimple creature had been his wet nurſe, and came to lament over her dear child, when weak and emaciated he returned from Ireland.—What is the favour, be it ever ſo pernicious, that an ignorant old woman can refuſe to a fine young man, whoſe infant cries ſhe has huſhed, and whoſe infant wants ſhe has ſupplied?—He told her, that if ſhe could

could procure him a key made to fit the church-door, he ſhould uſe it as a certain cure to charm away his grief.—I ſhall live, ſaid he, if you can bring me what I aſk; and do not tell it to any body, not ſo much as to your huſband; but if you refuſe to aſſiſt me, I ſhall ſurely die.

God forbid! cried the tender-hearted ſimpleton. —He put as much gold into her hand as might have purchaſed a key of the ſame metal with itſelf to any church-door in chriſtendom; and to do the thing as handſome in return, ſhe got two inſtead of one made for her young maſter, though of nothing better than common materials:—in caſe, ſaid ſhe to herſelf, he ſhould loſe one, here will be another to comfort the dear heart of him.—One of theſe only he received—it was enough, and he aſked for no more:—the other was gone, ſhe could not tell how. Her huſband, who had no more wit than his wife, believed, in a dream that ſhe pretended to have had, how the key of the church-door was loſt, and how they had been turned out of their office for the want of care:—upon which he conſented that ſhe ſhould walk three miles to a lockſmith the next day to get a new one made; that if one part of the dream ſhould come to paſs, they might be provided againſt the other, which would be much more fatal in its conſequences. Her three keys being finiſhed, ſhe trudged homewards; but being famiſhed with drought, ſtopped to buy a pennyworth of ſmall beer. Mrs Vernon was at the bar, and being the moſt affable of all landladies, ſhe aſked her tired

gueſt where ſhe came from, and what ſhe had been doing?—There could be no harm in telling her dream; ſo ſhe told it, and even ſhewed Mrs. Vernon one of the new keys, which ſhe ſaid they were to lock up in their cheſt till the old one was loſt, as ſhe had dreamed it would be.—Mrs. Vernon treated her with a pot of porter, and the key was laid upon the table; ſo if it was not loſt there, ſhe could not tell where it was loſt.—She ſaid nothing of it to her old man, but gave him one of the two ſhe had left, and carried the other to her young maſter, who ſleeping at his own requeſt at that time on the ground-floor, his occaſional viſits to the church may be eaſily accounted for, though in none of them had he ever the good fortune to encounter the ghoſt.

CHA

CHAP. XVII.

Very natural attentions—A horſe-pond equal to the Red Sea—Signal from the ſteeple—Preparations for an aſſault—Convenient ſtation—Different meaſurements of time—The groan—The retort—The apology, and the promiſe of a coward.

EMELINE turned back as all the family were ſeparating at night for their different apartments, and whiſpered Sir William, to put him in mind of two promiſes ſhe had exacted from him.—One was, that he would guard againſt the cold: the other that he would not go unattended. He renewed them haſtily on her fair hand; and ſhe followed Lady Gertrude, who, with Mrs. Davenport, had juſt paſſed on before.

SIR William, when he had that morning ſummoned his affrighted neighbours to a ſecond interview, found

their courage ſo much renovated by his cook and butler, that it would have been no hard matter to direct their imagination into whatever channel he pleaſed: but then he knew it would have reverted back to the dark ſource of ſuperſtition, as ſoon as they had left his preſence; or at lateſt, that, with the powers of good cheer, would alſo evaporate the powers of ſound reaſoning. Inſtead, therefore, of upbraiding them with the charge of folly, or even telling them they had been impoſed on by a being clothed in fleſh as they were, he told them he would himſelf go in ſearch of this terrible ghoſt, and, when he had found it, convince them, that, inſtead of being a ſhadow, as they ſuppoſed, this very ghoſt ſubſtance enough to feel what it was to receive—a ducking in his horſe-pond, to which place he would ſee it conducted; and further aſſured them, that this ſort of diſcipline was at all times equal to laying it in the Red Sea. Whenever, ſaid he, in the courſe of this night, you hear the church bell ſound from the tower, aſſemble yourſelves and neighbours in the church-yard; till then be ſilent, for, if my intentions ſhould be ſpread abroad, the ghoſt, on hearing that I am in purſuit of it, will keep at home, and I ſhall not be able to ſerve you by making it my priſoner, which this night I mean to do; and you may come to my appointment without fear, when I have given you the ſignal of three ſtrokes on the bell, for then it will not be able to hurt you.—With this aſſurance the illiterate harmleſs creatures were ſo fully ſatisfied, that, having declared the ſtricteſt

obedience

obedience to his commands, they departed home, confiding in him as pagans of old were wont to do in their dark prefaging oracles.

WITH a brace of piſtols in his pocket, and a ſword under his arm, followed by his own man, whom Emeline would not have left out of the ghoſt-hunting party—thus accoutred, thus attended, did Sir William iſſue from the caſtle, as ſoon as he ſuppoſed the family were ſettled for their night's repoſe; and, having before procured the original key, he let himſelf in very ſoftly at the church-door, juſt as the clock ſtruck one.—The dark-lanthorn which his ſervant carried was turned ſo as to be inviſible, if the ghoſt ſhould be already there; and, with his eſquire as cloſe to him as he could poſſibly creep without incommoding his maſter, he ſet himſelf down in a pew juſt within the door, which happened to be ſo conveniently high that their heads could not be ſeen over it from any part of the church.

A STILL and heavy ſilence for a long time pervaded the awful ſtructure. Sir William, undaunted and eager to ſeize upon his prey, waited with impatience for the ghoſt to make his *entrée:* the pew he occupied was but a few yards from the place where the cheſt that held the communion-plate was depoſited, and to this ſpot he expected the ghoſt would make his firſt viſit, which was the occaſion of his

his taking a local reſidence ſo near it; he did not ſpeak himſelf, nor ſuffer his man to whiſper; a freedom which terror ſometimes inclined him to uſe, for fear he might be diſcovered by the villain or villains he expected, and of courſe his knowledge of the plot in which they were engaged.

The ſonorous bell had announced one ſolitary quarter; that one appeared to be four when meaſured by impatience, and double as many when counted by fear.—Sir William dreaded a diſappointment, his ſervant dreaded the ghoſt; and, whilſt the ſound of the clock ſtill vibrated on the ear of night, another ten thouſand times more terrible to the ears of Sir William's attendant came from a nearer quarter; the very door at which they had entered opened again, and down ſunk poor Cheſter at the feet of his maſter, more than half dead with apprehenſion.—Sir William pitied the coward, but ſpurned the man, and, ſtarting upon his feet, looked round him for the light which had been repreſented to him as always attending the ghoſt, but he ſaw none. Footſteps he diſtinctly heard, but they were not directed to the church treaſures; every moment carried them further from him, till at laſt, with all the attention it was poſſible to exert, he could hear them no longer.

He ſnatched up the lanthorn which ſtood by his ſide, and turning the light from him, darted at once quickly

quickly and quietly from his place of concealment, looking every where about him, but ſtill perceiving no animate object ſo far as the faint glimmering rays, it caſt out could help him to diſtinguiſh.—He would have been at a loſs which way to go next, if a ſigh, as deep as the ſoul ſends out when it is about to leave the body, had not given him a full direction.

Great God! What is it I ſee!—exclaimed Sir William—Montague, my dear Montague! how came you here at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a ſituation?

It was indeed Montague Davenport; this happened to be his night of viſitation, and he had not expected to meet company at the tomb of his miſtreſs. His arms embraced the ſtatue of pure marble, which repreſented her purer ſelf. He had once ſeen it by the light of the ſun, and now knew exactly where to find it in the darkeſt night: this effigy was ſufficiently like the beautiful original, being done from a whole-length portrait, to inflame the ſoul of paſſion with madneſs. Montague's was the ſoul of paſſion; and his ideas at this moment were wrapped in phrenſy.

Roused by the exclamation of his friend, he quitted his poſition, turned himſelf round with a look of diſpleaſure, and ſaid fiercely, Montreville, you have ſurpriſed me! from you I did not expect

this.

this freedom! It is neither humane nor manly to ſteal like a thief on the ſacred ſorrows of him who would conceal them!

By heaven! you injure me, replied the other, with equal ſpirit and more haughtineſs—when in a moment the depreſſed ſtate of his poor friend's mind reverting in all its horrors to his ingenuous ſoul, he conſidered what would have been his own deſpair if Emeline had fallen the martyr of death inſtead of Adelaide: every ſentiment, but increaſed affection, was totally eradicated, and the ſubmiſſions he made were ſo generous, ſo pathetic, ſo full of tenderneſs, that Montague, falling on his neck, could only ſay, Oh William! how you make me feel my own unworthineſs! You know I have been acting the hypocrite, and you know how hard it muſt be for a proud heart to bear detection.

They might have proceeded to much greater lengths in this ſcene of brotherly reconciliation, if Sir William's ſervant, who two minutes before, when he fancied he heard his maſter talking to the ghoſt, would have been thankful to any body who would have taken the trouble of ſhooting him through the head, had not come running up to them, on hearing the name of Montague pronounced more than once, and knowing by his voice that it was indeed he himſelf who anſwered Sir William.—They were too good and too humane not to receive him into their protection, after he had honeſtly confeſſed

that

that his fears would kill him if they ſent him from their preſence, but that if they would let him ſtay near them they ſhould find he was no coward at a pinch.

CHAP. XVIII.

Volunteer—Commanding officer—And the forlorn hope—A ghoſt brim-full of tender ſympathy—A lover diſconcerted by compariſon—Univerſal ſatisfaction—The eſcort—Walking preferred to ſleeping, and the poſt-chaiſe.

MONTAGUE became a volunteer in the ghoſt-ſervice, although the commanding officer on that forlorn hope ſtrongly adviſed him to return back to the caſtle. They began each of them to think the undertaking a forlorn one indeed, when the third quarter had gone, and no ghoſt appeared:—they had taken their poſt under the monument, from whence it would juſt then have been difficult, if not impoſſible, to draw the diſconſolate lover of Adelaide: but in this ſituation he would have been equal to encounter a hoſt of beings natural or ſupernatural.

CHESTER, who found his courage very much revived by Mr. Davenport's uniting himſelf to the party,

party, ventured to ſtand on his ſtill trembling legs, and even to liſten for ſounds that a few minutes before would have made him wiſh the earth to open, and afford him a tranſitory hiding-place.—Hark! he cried—God preſerve us!—It is coming ſure enough!

SILENCE! ſaid Sir William and Montague in a breath; for they too had heard footſteps outſide of the door; and quickly applying the key, open it flew, and, like two young lions eager to ruſh on their prey, they darted from their concealment—a precipitancy which would not have happened but that the loud voice of poor Cheſter, when he firſt bawled out that it was coming, made them ſurmiſe that his cries muſt have alarmed the ghoſt, and that it would elude their ſearch if they did not fall upon it by ſurpriſe.

QUICK as were their motions, they were not quick enough—Sir William expanded his arm, and ſhouted out, Have at ye, whoever you are! but it was only a vapour that he embraced.—Montague, who ſaw a light dancing along the church-yard with extreme ſwiftneſs, flew with the ſpeed of the winds till he had overtaken it; and at the very ſame moment halloo'd to his friend, telling him the ghoſt was ſecured.—Sir William and his man were with him in an inſtant, and found he was ſtruggling with a woman, who tried to break from his hold with all her force.

LORD,

LORD, Sir William! is it really you and Mr. Davenport? exclaimed Mrs. Jacquiline Vernon, in a tone of real or pretended tranſport big with joy; for it was no other than the innocent hoſteſs of the Montreville Arms, who had ſpread ſuch terrors through the neighbourhood by her nocturnal excurſions.—Js it really you, gentlemen? Oh dear! I am ſo frightened! God forgive me! I took you for rogues or robbers, and would have given my life for a farthing.

STRIKE three ſtrokes on the bell, ſaid Sir William to his man.

WHAT can you mean, Sir? aſked the lady, in a tone of trepidation that was not affected.

NOTHING more, madam, than to preſent you to thoſe neighbours whoſe peace you have diſturbed as a ghoſt well deſerving their further notice, and to reſtore them to their ſenſes.

THE bell ſounded.——Stop, Sir! cried ſhe; for heaven's ſake, ſtop!—Hear firſt what I have to ſay, before you expoſe me.

SPEAK quickly, he replied, for your friends will be with you immediately; but for fear you ſhould get cold in the night-air, you muſt permit me to hand you to the church, where I underſtand you frequently come at this hour to offer up your private devotions.

YES!

YES! returned ſhe, with a deep ſigh, which might have ſerved as an echo to that uttered by Montague at the tomb of his miſtreſs.—Yes! the charge is too true, Sir—If it be wrong to ſteal upon the privacy of night, to weep over the aſhes of my dear old lady, to whoſe bounty I owe all my comforts—if it be a crime to ſhed tears of recollection over the ſweeteſt flower that ever the untimely hand of death cut from its ſtalk, I am both guilty and criminal.

CAN you hear this, and not be moved with compaſſion? cried Davenport; does ſhe not come to pay a tribute of gratitude to your parent, and another of ſympathy to my Adelaide?—Let her go; ſhe is entitled to our approbation.—Go then, my good creature! my particular thanks you ſhall receive at another ſeaſon.—Curtſying, and weeping her thanks, ſhe would have availed herſelf of his permiſſion to retire; but Sir William begged to detain her a little longer, whilſt he aſked her a few queſtions, and ſettled ſome certain preliminaries with which he could not prevail upon himſelf to diſpenſe.

HAVE you been long in the habit of viſiting the church on theſe errands of ſympathy?

ALAS! Sir, it is not more than three weeks that I have had the means of gratifying my heart with ſuch melancholy enjoyments: I had no key to let myſelf into the church, till providentially the ſexton's wife loſt one, which I was fortunate enough to find; and ever ſince that time, I own it to you, gentlemen, I

have

have indulged my ſad, ſad heart in all the luxury of midnight ſorrow!

GOOD God! cried Montague, how exquiſite muſt be her ſenſibility!

PATIENCE! my friend, whiſpered Sir William, give me leave to purſue my interrogatories a little further.—Doubtleſs, madam, you muſt have heard and known how much your walking about at theſe unſeaſonable hours has diſturbed the quiet of your peaceable neighbours; and I am almoſt incredulous how a lady of your tenderneſs, of your ſuſceptibility, could ſuffer theſe children of ignorance and error to perſiſt in a fallacious idea, which deprived them of repoſe, and unfitted them for labour.

INDEED, and indeed, Sir, I did not know it was me who they ſuppoſed to be the ghoſt, or I ſhould certainly have undeceived them.

I WILL anſwer for her, ſaid Montague; ſuch a mind as her's would ſpurn at prevarication, and is incapable of any thing like cruelty.—Sir William ſaw the woman and her artifice in a very different light; but perceiving he was determined to be her champion, and afraid of doing any thing which might occaſion him additional diſtreſs, he pretended to be convinced; and though he conſidered her as an object worthy of rebuke, if not of puniſhment before the multitude, at the ſummons of the bell, poured into the church from all quarters, he had ſo

far

far compromiſed the matter with his ſuppliant, that, provided ſhe aſcertained herſelf to be the identical ghoſt by whom they had been ſo much frightened, he would not, as he had threatened, deliver her over to their diſcipline.

THIS treaty being concluded, the church was filled with the whole contents of the pariſh, men, women, and children, to the number of more than three hundred; in whoſe faces was written, in legible characters, every degree of apprehenſion, from timidity to abſolute terror.

MRS. Vernon on theſe ſort of viſitations had always covered her ſlender perſon with a long white flannel cloak to keep out the cold. Sir William made her alſo hold the lanthorn in her hand ſo that they all cried out as they ruſhed into the church; The ghoſt! the ghoſt! the ghoſt! and would have flown out at the doors again; but Sir William ordered them to be ſilent, foreſeeing what would be their firſt movement. He then waved his hand, and commanded ſilence, whilſt he took the trouble upon himſelf to clear their minds from the deadly weed of ſuperſtition, without expoſing the promoter of it to any unneceſſary mortification. Montague did more; he ſpoke of the good motive which had made her troubleſome, with ſo much commendation, pleading her cauſe with more energy than he would have pleaded his own, and beſtowed ſo many praiſes on the goodneſs of her heart, that, inſtead of being torn in

pieces,

pieces, as ſhe had ſome reaſon to expect, they were ſatisfied, and ſhe acquitted.

HAVING called down a thouſand bleſſings on the heads of their benefactors and protectors, the multitude departed, eaſed of all their fears; many of whom would have the honour of eſcorting the ghoſt in ſafety to the Montreville Arms, where they were treated with the very beſt the Montreville Arms afforded.

THE dark clouds of night were beginning to vaniſh from the face of heaven, before the midſt of deception was entirely removed from the minds of the people. Montague had no inclination to ſleep; his mind had been deranged by the ſtrong powers of ſenſibility he had ſo lately witneſſed. He even fancied that Mrs. Vernon's tender feelings were nearly as lively as his own. He was diſpleaſed with himſelf, when he conſidered that the torments he ſuffered for the loſs of Adelaide were almoſt equalled in ſentiment by a dependant, who had only caught a tranſient and diſtant view of her thouſand virtues, her thouſand perfections; which being impreſſed on his ſoul ought, he thought, to have ſilenced the beating of his heart long before.

SUCH were the gloomy cogitations of Davenport, as arm in arm he ſtrolled with Sir William towards the caſtle; and, by the time they reached it, day laughed in their faces, as if to ridicule the ſerious

countenance

countenance of Montague, and the ſleepy looks of his companion. I wiſh you may not feel the ill effects of this night's frolic, my friend, ſaid the latter; if you do not go to bed, and ſleep ſix hours at leaſt, to-morrow I ſhall be inclined to tell tales, or if I do not turn informer, your complexion will let them ſo far into the ſecret that you have not taken proper care of yourſelf.

Just now replied Montague, I am not inclined to ſleep: but let us take one turn more down the Cheſnut Walk, and afterwards I will try to be more conformable to your terms.—Sir William, though yawning at every ſecond word, and dying to take poſſeſſion of his pillow, would not mortify him by a refuſal; but with infinite reluctance re-meaſured back the ſteps he had juſt taken:—his eyes half-ſhut, and without the leaſt inclination to interrupt the profound meditation of his friend, by making any brilliant obſervations of his own, either on the paſt night or the preſent morning, till, coming within ſight of the parſonage-houſe, his ſenſes were rouſed and his attention revived, by ſeeing a poſt-chaiſe ſtanding before the door, and Mr. Armatage's man, John, who had ſomething ſo remarkable in his figure as not to be miſtaken for any other, paying the poſt-boy. Montague had all this while his eyes fixed on the path he was treading, and his thoughts ſo deeply riveted on one heavenly object, that he ſaw nothing but the earth, and contemplated nothing but an angel.—Sir William turned him round, and ſet his face again towards the caſtle, without pointing out to his friend

the

the object which had made himself feel both pleasure and surprise. He longed to hear more of the young lady's adventures, and was astonished that John should follow his master's letter so quickly; he resolved that as soon as he got up, and Emeline was prepared to go with him, they would not lose a moment in using the key which was to let them into the whole of the fair adventurer's history. To have let Montague into this secret history would not have agreed either with the faded spirits of that disconsolate lover, or with his own faith to Mr. Armatage.

Curiosity is powerful; but sleep, more powerful, had so completely got the mastery over every faculty of Sir William's mind, that as soon as he parted from Montague, he went to his repose, and did not awaken any more till the first dinner-bell had rung.—He was no coxcomb, of course took up very little time to make himself ready, regretting the whole time he was so employed. It was now too late to go to the parsonage that day; the morning was past, and the afternoon so short that no business could be done before the next morning, when he was sure the impatience of Miss Davenport would add another spur to his own.

His servant had told him, whilst he was dressing, that a labourer who worked in the parsonage garden had been with him several hours, before he would venture to disturb him, with a message from one of

Mr,

Mr. Armatage's ſervants, who had arrived early that morning, to prepare the houſe for his maſter's reception. The purport of the meſſage was only to ſay he ſhould be glad to deliver his maſter's commands to Sir William, when he was at leaſure to receive them; that all the party he had left were in good health, and that it would not be long before they would come to Worthenton.

Of all this Sir William ſaid not a word when he joined the dinner-party, but entertained them with as much of his night's adventure as might ſerve to ſet the ladies' minds at reſt, as far as they were intereſted for the future peace of their illiterate neighbours, concealing the ſhare Montague had in the revolution of their ſentiments, as well as the motives to which Mrs. Jacquiline Vernon had been pleaſed to attribute her extraordinary perambulations. He was afraid to raiſe ſimilar feelings in the mind of his mother, that her tender tale had produced on the paſſionate ſoul of his friend; he therefore entirely ſuppreſſed it, and contented himſelf with ſaying, that the perſon who occaſioned the late alarm had done it merely by accident; that the error was removed, and every one reſtored to their former ſecurity.

Sir William found a favourable minute to tell Emeline of John's arrival; and they fixed for going to the parſonage early the next morning; eight o'clock

o'clock was the hour named, yet they met in the ſaloon ſooner than they had appointed by forty minutes. All lovers will know what was the inducement to Sir William; and thoſe ladies who have as much curioſity as Miſs Davenport will be at no loſs to account for her more than punctuality on the preſent occaſion.

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CHAP. XIX.

A private viſit to a public perſon—Tea-table confuſion, and a ſprained ancle—New mode of ſtudying philoſophy—A trip to the parſonage—Two arm-chairs—A good breakfaſt—The lady—The cavern—The lock and key.

VERY ſoon after the lovers had ſtrolled from the caſtle, Montague alſo ſtarted from his pillow. He had been all night tormented by viſions equally torturing with what were produced by his waking reveries.—He thought himſelf firſt up; and to while away the ſolitary hours between his riſing and his breakfaſt time, it entered into his head, or rather aſcended from his heart to his head, that he would carry his thanks to the amiable miſtreſs of the Montreville Arms, for the tender remembrance ſhe ſtill preſerved of his ever adored Adelaid! And though I do not know exactly what paſſed at the interview, yet, by the

the appearance of Montague, when two hours after he ſhewed himſelf in Lady Gertrude's dreſſing-room, I muſt ſuppoſe Mrs. Vernon had been particularly eloquent and pathetic.

The ſilent deſpair that ſat upon his features, though ſo viſible to my eyes, paſſed unobſerved by his mother and Lady Gertrude; perhaps it was becauſe he tried to hide his chagrin under a maſk of cheerfulneſs, which had nothing to do with nature, and could have fitted him only from his very long cuſtom of wearing it.—He filled the chair, which was always left vacant for him, next to Lady Gertrude, and then aſked what was become of his ſiſter and Sir William.

We expected information rather than enquiry, replied Mrs. Davenport; we have not ſeen either of them to-day, and took it for granted that you were all gone out rambling together!

Be ſo good, my dear friend, to make the tea, ſaid Lady Gertrude; now that Montague is returned we will wait for them no longer.—As ſhe ſpoke they entered the room, after being abſent on their private expedition nearly three hours.

And how entered they the room?—Like happy lovers, feaſted, but not cloyed, with the ſweets of tender converſe—cheeks glowing with health—eyes ſparkling with vivacity?——Nothing like it. ——It rather ſeemed they had faſted than feaſted. ——Sir William looked——I cannot tell how he

looked—as if he had been knocked on the head—fooliſh I was going to ſay—that would have been a miſnomer. Folly never impreſſed her ſtamp on the features of ſenſibility. What then did he reſemble? Why, a man walking in his ſleep, and ready to run his head againſt every thing that came in his way. If you had looked for a roſe, you could not have plucked it from the dimpled cheeks of Emeline; the lilly had over-run them all: and had Love wanted to re-kindle his torch, he could not have done it at her eyes; for all their fire was extinguiſhed

They took their places, but ſcarce ventured to look at each other; and if they happened to ſpeak, their confuſion was more evident than before. Mrs. Davenport, from theſe uncommon appearances, imagined they had quarrelled, and became a party in their mutual uneaſineſs; but ſaid nothing, as ſhe ſaw their derangement was not yet obſerved by Lady Gertrude, who happened to be very deeply engaged with her beloved and dejected favourite:—but having by chance caſt her eyes on Miſs Davenport, ſhe cried out, My dear child! what in the name of heaven ails you? William! what have you done to make her look ſo like a ſpectre?

Instantaneous was the change this queſtion brought about.—His uſual fine flow of ſpirits returned, like the wave to the ſhore, made ſtronger by emerſion.—Speak! my charmer! he cried, preſſing Emeline's hands to his lips—Speak! and do away

the

the idea my mother ſeems to have imbibed. Have I not offered you my life, my love? Are we not too happy? Perhaps that may be the caſe; for I know it is the property of exquiſite bliſs ſometimes to put on the garb of ſadneſs.

WHAT ſhall I ſay? replied Emeline; your obſervation is too juſt to be contradicted: but that ugly turn of my foot pains me exceedingly, and ſhe burſt into tears.

WHERE? when did you meet with this accident, my love? ſaid her mother, more alarmed than deceived by the excuſe ſhe made for the paleneſs of her looks.

IT was cloſe at the door that I trode unguardedly on a ſmooth pebble: I did not complain then, but now it grows worſe; ſo pray, dear mamma, let me go with you—a fomentation of vinegar and a tight bandage will make me well in half an hour.

AND when the operation is over, added Sir William, admit me, I intreat you, to enquire after your patient.

You ſhould have taken more care of her, ſaid Lady Gertrude, as Emeline left the apartment tenderly ſupported by her mother, who, feeling her tremble more and more at every ſtep, without any ſign of lameneſs, which the hurt in her foot muſt have occaſioned, was agitated by a thouſand con-

jectures,

jectures, to none of which ſhe could affix a definitive appellation.

WHILST Miſs Davenport is getting her uncle bathed in vinegar—Sir William talking to Lady Gertrude of preſent joys and future proſpects, in a manner ſo ſanguine that ſometimes ſhe does not underſtand his meaning—whilſt Montague, pretending to liſten and to be entertained by the philoſophy of his inſpired friend, is employing his thoughts on ſubjects the very reverſe of preſent joys or future proſpects; and whilſt my reader is wondering what can be the matter, I ſhall take the opportunity of ſaying ſomething, juſt to fill up the pages, of what happened to Emeline and Sir William on their early viſit to the parſonage.

JOHN, the faithful meſſenger and confidant of Mr. Armatage, was privately informed by Cheſter of the company he might expect on this morning, and that they would certainly be there before breakfaſt; ſo that when they arrived, they found a blazing fire in the library, with two arm-chairs, one placed on each ſide of it, as if he had been providing for the reception of two magiſtrates inſtead of two lovers; beſides which, the beſt china was ranged on a large table put between the arm-chairs, to ſet them, if poſſible, at a ſtill greater diſtance, and on this table alſo was prepared a very excellent breakfaſt: but theſe good things had like to have been thrown away upon Emeline, who vowed ſhe

would neither eat nor drink till John had told them all he knew about the lady found in the cave, and how his maſter puniſhed the wretches who had put her there—After that, ſaid ſhe, we will look for the firſt part of her hiſtory, and read it as we drink our chocolate.

JOHN, with great ſubmiſſion, propoſed that they ſhould firſt take a diſh of tea, which would be loſing no time; as, with their permiſſion, he would wait upon them whilſt they were drinking it, and anſwer all the queſtions Miſs Emeline ſhould be pleaſed to aſk him. Sir William ſeconded the propoſition; and, the inſtant ſhe knew what would beſt pleaſe him whom ſhe delighted to pleaſe, the vow ſo quickly made was as quickly cancelled; and where is the catholic or proteſtant who ſhall deny her abſolution?

JOHN would have humbly ſtood with a waiter in his hand the whole time he remained in their preſence; but John was a man well ſtricken in years, had dandled Emeline on his knee, and carried Sir William in his arms, too often for them to accept an offering of reſpect that muſt be attended with perſonal inconvenience to himſelf. Sir William, who was content with a ſmall chair by the ſide of Emeline, rather than one ever ſo large at a diſtance, made the old man ſit down in that he had refuſed to occupy, which gave John an opportunity of ſhewing more obedience than either eaſe or gracefulneſs.

Not expecting any later intelligence from Mr. Armatage than what was conveyed in his own letter, their inquiries were confined to the lady—and ſuch a ſhower of them poured upon him from the volatile Emeline, that it is impoſſible I ſhould ſet down half their number—and a few of them, ſuch as will appear with proper anſwers, are only neceſſary to the information of any reader who is not ſuperabundantly curious.

Is ſhe young? Yes!—And beautiful?—As handſome as your ladyſhip.

That is a bold compariſon, my honeſt fellow!—This oppoſition did not come from Emeline.

But it is a true one, Sir William, and you will ſay ſo when you ſee the lady of the cave.

But, dear John, what is this charming lady's name?

That, Miſs Emeline, I muſt be excuſed from telling you.—My maſter will have her called by no name but the Lady of the Cave. If I dared to diſobey, and my heart yearns to do it—Oh dear! oh dear! what wonders I could tell you! His Honour's hair would ſtand an end, and your cap, Miſs, would heave upon your head!

We do not aſk you to betray the confidence of your maſter, ſaid Sir William, we would not permit you to do ſo.

WHY—no—rejoined his fairer and more eager inquiſitor, we will not deſire you to tell us what he has abſolutely forbidden you to tell—But, good John, tell us as much as you can.—Your maſter has informed us how this poor dear creature was found, but not by whom, or in what condition ſhe was found. He only ſays ſhe was brought into the cabin to all appearance dead.

DEAD! repeated John, daſhing a tear from his cheek with the back of his hand—Aye, Madam! as dead as a door-nail; only, bleſſed be God! ſhe came to life again, and is now as well, Miſs, and as happy, as heart can wiſh. He here ſtopped.—Pray go on, ſaid Emeline, not chooſing to afford him a moment of ſilence. Was it you that had the good fortune to find this dear creature?

No, Miſs Emeline, I can't ſay it was.—But the foreign ſervants we hired to go with us, and our poſtilion, were the lucky ſouls: they knew the curſed country better than I did, and ventured farther into the ſcrambling mountains than I could do, and at laſt, in a great cavern, as big as the caſtle, they found her lying on the cold ground, with not ſo much as a truſs of ſtraw to keep her from the damp—in ſuch a hurry were the devil's imps to hide her away when they heard we were at their heels, which news was told to them by one of their own furies who had ſeen us in the market-town.

GOOD

GOOD GOD! cried Sir William, what is the name of that country, diſgraced by theſe infernals?

THEY call it Savoy.—My maſter did not ſay I was to keep that a ſecret.

WELL—but now tell us, ſaid Miſs Davenport impatiently, when the lady recovered from her fainting fit, how did your maſter puniſh theſe deteſtable monſters?

WHY, Miſs Emeline, you muſt know, the tender lamb, as I may ſay, when he had got her out of the wolf's clutches, was ſo bad that my kind-hearted miſtreſs, who loves her as ſhe does her own ſoul, would not hear of her being moved from the miſerable hut till her life was out of danger, and her ſtrength got up. My maſter and the doctor was of the ſame mind; ſo by their orders we drove the three hell-born ſwine before us, bound hand and foot, into the very ſame hole out of which we had dragged their pretty and piteous priſoner, allowing them beds of ſtraw, and as much ſuſtenance as will ſerve to keep life and ſoul together. So when we had tarried in theſe terrible mountains fourteen days, and the lady was well enough to travel, maſter gave the men who diſcovered her a very great reward, and promiſed to double it on condition they would not let Jaquis or his wife, or his wife's ſiſter, come out of their hole, or any body go near them, ſave to carry them their victuals, till ſuch time as maſter ſhould write from his own country to ſay

they

they might be releaſed; and if this letter did not come in three months, then they are to ſet them free, without waiting any longer for directions. And I will be bound for the lads that they will not move off the premiſes till all maſter's orders are obeyed, and they have earned another reward by their diligence.

And this is all you have to tell us?

For the preſent, Miſs Emeline, I muſt ſay no more: but when Sir William has looked in maſter's drawer, if he pleaſes to call for me, I ſhall be at hand.—The breakfaſt being over, he was modeſtly retiring, but with a look that ſhewed he had rather ſtay—he wiſhed it indeed; but more with a view of ſerving them than to gratify his own curioſity. Sir William miſconſtrued the expreſſion of his face—Stay where you are, ſaid he, already you know ſo much of this iniquitous buſineſs, that I think my friend Armatage will not be diſpleaſed if I let you into a little more of it; for in this drawer, he tells me, I ſhall find much information.

Honeſt John ſtammered out ſomething, they did not hear what—his voice was choked, and his words were very inarticulate. Sir William wondered what ailed him, and Emeline flew to unlock the treaſure-fraught drawer, the key of which ſhe had held in her hand ever ſince they had left the caſtle.—This lock did not ſo ſoon acknowledge its

old

old acquaintance as Mr. Armatage had ſuppoſed. But what the ſteady hands of Sir William and Miſs Davenport could not effect, the trembling ones of John at laſt fully accompliſhed—the key turned, and the drawer opened.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

[illegible]riſh of an author—Queſtions about the Packet—A lover for the firſt time inattentive to his miſtreſs—The picture—The note—The Packet, and its contents—Eloquent incoherence.

Now it is that the title of my book will begin to bear ſome analogy to the ſubject of the work.—Do you remember, reader, when a certain packet was found by Richard and Sarah Adams, how that, by the weight, they ſuppoſed it to contain money, and carried it to the parſon of the pariſh?—Do you alſo remember how fooliſhly this packet was loſt in the head-ſwimming ſcene between Madam Johnſon and her friend Madam Jacquiline Vernon, as well as the great reward, nine times adverti ſed in the newſpaper, for the recovery of it? If you have forgot any of theſe circumſtances, I conclude you have no mind to go back two or three hundred pages merely to refreſh your memory, when the very packet itſelf is this moment in the hand of Emeline, and you might hear

hear her exclaim—Great God of heaven! the picture of my brother! the very picture Lady Gertrude's own hands tied round the neck of Adelaide!

Sir William at any other moment of his life would have ſtarted to hear the voice of his miſtreſs ſounding in accents of ſurpriſe that bordered on terror: but at the ſame moment that ſhe ſent out the cry, he was himſelf transfixed, without ſenſe and without motion.

It was not the picture of Montague on which his eyes were riveted, but on theſe lines, written and ſigned by Mr. Armatage on a ſlip of paper which he had taken up, as ſhe was unfolding the packet.

"My dear Sir William, whenever you are permitted to examine the Packet I leave behind me, your ſiſter, Adelaide Montreville, will be living, in health, and on the point of being reſtored to your embraces."

Shall we pauſe here, reader, or ſhall we proceed?—Pauſe a moment, and behold Emeline ſpeechleſs as well as Sir William; for ſhe too had ſeen the words life and Adelaide linked together. Behold at their feet this venerable domeſtic no longer afraid of diſobeying orders, now calling on the merciful God, who had preſerved Miſs Montreville, to ſtrengthen her brother and her friend, that they might not die under the oppreſſion of his own bountiful providence.

His prayer was in part anſwered. Emeline fainted, and her fall brought Sir William to his ſenſes; his tender aſſiduities, nature, youth, and a glaſs of water, ſoon made her open her eyes. If we are thus affected, ſhe cried, what will become of Lady Gertrude, and of Montague?

I LEAVE Sir William to ſoothe her fears—to quiet his own—now reading a line in the packet, then aſking John if all this was not a dream—Did ſhe really live?—had he ſeen her—had he ſpoken to her?—Again with ſtreaming eyes wading through the barbarous deſcription of her early ſufferings—Emeline ſobbing for the cruelties exerciſed on the ſiſter of her ſoul—Sir William execrating the wretch who had cauſed them to be executed; and at every line ſwearing to extirpate the whole race of the Johnſons.—I leave them the prey of a thouſand mingled paſſions, and a thouſand different emotions, to give you the beſt tranſlation I am able of the worſt language that has ever fallen under my inſpection; though no doubt the decyphering might have been an eaſier taſk for Mrs. Johnſon, to whom it was addreſſed at Paris, after Miſs Montreville had been ſafely conveyed to her priſon, in the mountains of Savoy. To the letter was added a poſtſcript, containing ſo full a direction to their infernal abode, that any body leſs intereſted than Mr. Armatage in finding it out, would have been at no great difficulty.

Contents

Contents of the PACKET.

Madame my Lady,

All that my huſband and I can do for your bounty to us as well as to our daughter Jacquiline will be little enough, though inſtead of taking the young woman out of your way, we were to lay down our own lives, if by ſo doing we could ſerve or pleaſe you. I ſhould not have had the boldneſs to write to ſo great a lady, but ſince we came home I diſcovered that my charge had got a ſaint hung about her neck, and that ſhe was always praying to it; and who knows if I had let her keep it, but ſome bad luck might have befallen us through his means. I have taken it from her; and as he is not one of our country ſaints, he can do us no good; ſo I ſend it, madame, to you, who are of the ſame religion, that he may be of ſome ſervice in his own country, where, no doubt, I ſhould think by his good looks, he is worſhipped before any other.—Now, Madame my lady, as I am ſo bold to write to you, I hope it will be no offence if I tell you how Jaquis and I managed Mademoiſelle after you went away from ———, and left her aſleep. As ſoon as ſhe awoke, and rung her bell, I went into the room, and told her as you had ordered me, that in the night you had received an expreſs from Paris, to ſignify Mademoiſelle her couſin was dying; that as ſhe had been ill, you would not have her diſturbed, but ſet out directly, and we were to follow, as ſoon

as

as ſhe had taken breakfaſt.—She aſked if you had left a note for her—I ſaid no; you was too much in haſte for that, but had deſired that I would ſee her ſafe to Paris, and take great care of her upon the road; and that ſhe might be the better guarded, I had made my huſband promiſe to go with us: ſhe ſeemed very much concerned for her couſin's illneſs, but was otherwiſe contented and ſatisfied with the firſt day's journey.—She told me ſhe ſhould ſoon go to her own country, and what a joyful meeting ſhe ſhould have with her mother and other friends; and we went on, good company, till near the ſecond night-fall, when ſhe began to ſhow uneaſineſs that we were not yet within ſight of Paris. Jaquis, who knew we were now out of harm's way, anſwered her roughly, according to your own inſtructions that we were not to ſpoil her by indulgence.—He ſaid ſhe muſt never expect to ſee Paris again, but make up her mind to go and live with us in the mountains. —Hold your tongue, Jaquis, ſaid I: don't you ſee ſhe is dead; for ſo indeed I thought ſhe was, when her head fell all of a ſudden down upon my ſhoulder. Now you know, Madame my lady, it was not your orders that we ſhould do any little matter to haſten her death, though we ſhould have been proud to ſhew our obedience in any way that you had been pleaſed to command us; ſo I thought it would be no harm to hold a little hartſhorn to her noſe, and rub her temples a bit. Jaquis called me a fool: ſhe rode, he ſaid, better as ſhe was; for if ever ſhe came to herſelf again there would be fine ſqualling

and

and crying.—I was pretty much of the ſame mind, ſo we let her alone, afterwards travelling an hour and a half quite convenient, till ſhe began to ſtir, opened her eyes, and ſeemed to remember ſomething of what Jaquis had ſaid about the mountains.—She cried out, Are you going to kill me!—fell into another fit, and ſtayed in them, one after another, thank our good ſaints, till we came ſafe to our own door. Once I did think ſhe was quite gone, and ſo thought Jaquis, who propoſed to bury her in the great foreſt we were paſſing through at the time, and I was of the like opinion, as no harm could then happen to us; and you, Madame my lady, would have been ſatisfied. Between us we got her out of the carriage, and laid her upon the ſnow, and were going to throw her into a pit, five or ſix yards further off, when we heard a great groan, but could not tell where it came from; for it was mid-night, and the moon dim, which terribly frightened us.—My huſband called out, let us toſs her into the pit, and be gone, for the devil inhabits this place: we took her up between us—her hand touched mine—I felt it move:—another groan made us take courage; for now we knew it was ſhe who groaned before: ſo I cried out ſhe was alive, and my huſband ran to the carriage, and brought a drop of good brandy, which we poured down her throat, and ſhe ſoon came ſo well to herſelf that we were able to go on, and met with no more hindrances till we got home.—Madame my lady, we ſhall break her in to behave towardly when we have had her a month or two,

but

but now ſhe weeps bitterly, and we can't get a word out of her. You may be ſure we ſhall let no body ever ſee her, or ſuffer her to go an inch out of our ſight; and if we ſhould all three happen to die before her, I have two young folks in my eye, whom I ſhall bring up to ſucceed us in the office, on whom you may depend as much as upon us. Madame my lady, the honeſt people who procured for you the corpſe you paſſed at Paris for Mademoiſelle, and afterwards ſent over to her family, were very much ſatisfied with the bounty you conveyed to them by our hands.

THIS is as much of the horable letter as I have patience to tranſlate, and more than Sir William and Miſs Davenport could read in three quarters of an hour, for paſſionate execrations on one part, tears, ſobs and exclamations on the other.—See the feeling, faithful old ſervant of Mr. Armatage again at their feet, intreating them to be ſoothed, and to prepare themſelves for what muſt very ſoon happen—for an interview with Miſs Montreville, who together with his maſter and miſtreſs, had arrived at the parſonage at break of day that very morning.

Do you ſuppoſe, reader, the brother, the friend of Adelaide, waited to hear all the words he uſed to announce the wonderful myſtery of her being covered by the ſame roof with themſelves?—Do you conceive that a ſlight door by which they were only divided, could reſiſt the force of friends ſo eager to embrace?

embrace?—Oh! what a confuſion of ſweet ſounds, did the opening of this ſingle barrier admit!—My brother!—my ſiſter!—My Emeline!—my Adelaide! for the firſt moment were all that could be formed into articulation—afterwards at the feet of their guardian angels, who had brought this precious jewel from the mine in which it had been buried, they all ſunk down, unable by words to expreſs the united agony of joy and gratitude. Sir William, ever the moſt graceful of his ſex, in this attitude, had more of divine than human in his face and figure, being the beſt calculated of all mankind to dignify ſuch an action of humility. Dear mother! dear Montague!—he cried, as Mr. and Mrs. Armatage ſeized and preſſed them all in their arms,—beloved ſufferers, your ſouls that are unrefreſhed by the breezes of comfort, how will they be able to ſtand this tempeſt of felicity?"

Let me not ſee them, exclaimed Adelaide, let me not ſee them, my brother, till they are prepared to meet me without ending my exiſtence, by the leaſt danger with which their own may be threatened!

In theſe ſort of diſcourſes the revolution of time paſſed ſo rapidly, that none of the party ſeemed to mark or heed its progreſs, till Mrs. Armatage cried out, What will Lady Gertrude, Mrs. Davenport, and her ſon, think is become of you? Leave me to finiſh all that you would yet ſay to each other, and go back as faſt as you can to the dear intereſting trio; put the clue of this bleſſing into their hands and wind us to them as quickly, but as cautiouſly as you can.

AFTER the half finiſhed picture I have given of what paſſed at the parſonage before Sir William and Emeline entered the dreſſing-room of Lady Gertrude, the youngeſt pupil in the ſcience of divination will be able to account for the total derangement in their ideas when they took their places at the breakfaſt table; and alſo to aſſign a reaſon why ſhe thought it proper to call on her mother as the very beſt ſurgeon for an ancle that had received no hurt —the beſt confidant of a ſecret that was too much for her own agitated boſom to contain—the wiſeſt counſellor by whom it was poſſible to be guided through the intricate mazes of caution—and the beſt aſſiſtant they could any where find in helping them to draw aſide the curtain.

I SAY nothing of Mrs. Davenport's joy and aſtoniſhment at the indiſtinct relation made to her by Emeline, it was hardly, if at all, inferior to what has been already repreſented; all that ſhe at firſt underſtood from her daughter's often ſelf-interrupted narrative was, that Miſs Montreville was living and at the parſonage! Who is there at ſuch a criſis that could have told it with preciſion?—preciſion is not the ſoul of tranſport, but the phlegmatic offspring of deliberation, and when Sir William ſtole from the preſence of his unſuſpicious mother, to unite himſelf to their council, they gained very little ſteadineſs by the acquiſition; ſo that, after an hour's conſultation, they went back to Lady Gertrude's apartment, without

out any fixed plan of proceeding, rather ſubmitting to chance than premeditation for a lucky hit by which they might unravel the delightful myſtery.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Hoarders fear detection—A broken reed may make a good staff, and a well-directed question produce a plain answer—Seneca's morals—Philosophy new and easy—What is happiness—If you do not find it in this chapter look for it in the next.

LADY Gertrude and Montague had mechanically walked to that spot where all their griefs were hoarded, the moment Sir William left them together, whilst he went to enquire after Miss Davenpor's hurt ancle; and when they all three came back, this guilty pair of mourners turned hastily from the east window to shun detection, luckily too much enveloped in their own agitation for their eyes to be very keen-sighted in spying out emotions foreign to what they experienced.

As she walked trembling towards her chair, leaning on poor Montague, the broken reed which she was pleased to call her staff, enquiring very tenderly after the

the ſprained ancle, Sir William came towards her and with looks of more than common love, ſolicitude, and veneration, put his arms round her, he led her to the chair ſhe had quitted, replacing her in it, whilſt Davenport tried to deceive his mother and ſiſter by talking cheerfully to them.

WHY is it, my deareſt mother, ſaid Sir William, that whenever I enter your apartment, if you happen to be reſting at this particular window, I have the misfortune to accuſe myſelf of diſturbing your meditations?

SPARE me, William, on this one ſubject, ſpare your too culpable mother!—there is but one perſon in the world who is acquainted with the whole of my weakneſs.

HE called upon Montague with a great deal of good nature, to account to him for having engroſſed the whole of Lady Gertrude's confidence, as far as it concerned her views from a certain window; and aſked, why he was not to be truſted with the charming and ſublime intercourſe with inanimate ſubjects, from which they were able to extract ſo many moments of ſweet gratification?

IT is, replied Montague, forcing a ſmile into his face, becauſe we are miſers; and ſorrows like riches diſſipate themſelves if divided amongſt many.

IT is for that reaſon we deſire to have a ſhare in them, ſaid Mrs. Davenport.

AND for that reaſon my dear mother, he returned, we try to hide them: my ſiſter, I am ſure, would not thank us for infecting Sir William's mind with thoſe ſentiments, which, though exquiſitely dear to ourſelves, would ill agree with the certainty there is of their mutual and I hope uninterrupted felicity.—Lady Gertrude ſaid, he had ſpoken her ſentiments —Sir William muttered to himſelf, this will not do —Your ſituation is too cold, ſaid he, and led her to the fireſide—Emeline had not yet been able to utter a word, but her attention wandered from one to the other, expecting what would come next.

SIR William took up a book that lay on the table; it happened to be Seneca's Morals, and it opened on happineſs.—How much good philoſophy, ſaid he, has been thrown away on a ſubject which philoſophers themſelves allow never exiſted—though as long as my lovely Emeline is ſeated by my ſide, I ſhall be of another opinion. I muſt go further, I muſt tell them, that, by endeavouring to diſprove it, they eſtabliſh the fact of its exiſtence. If there is no ſuch perfection as happineſs, what ſhall be ſaid for the wiſdom of thoſe men who waſte their ſtrength in breaking bubbles and fighting ſhadows?

I AM ſure of one tremendous certainty, cried the lover of Miſs Montreville—I am ſure that miſery is permanent!

THAT

THAT is more than I am convinced of, replied his friend—but we were talking of happineſs only; let every one of us declare, let the thing appear ever ſo improbable, nay impoſſible, what they conceive would make them converts to my new ſyſtem of philoſophy, and force them to confeſs that happineſs is exactly what it is commonly called, and not what the wiſe men call it; that it is a real good and not a vapour of the imagination.—Speak, Montague—what is there that could poſſibly or impoſſibly happen, which would make you confeſs the ſoundneſs of my doctrine?

UNLESS, anſwered he, a miracle ſhould cauſe me to revolt from my very late eſtabliſhed opinion, I muſt ever eſpouſe the cauſe of philoſophy, and ſay, there is not, there cannot now be any happineſs, at leaſt for me, on this ſide eternity.

FOR my part, ſaid Lady Gertrude, Montague's ſentiments are ſo ſimilar to my own, on certain ſubjects, that I deſire only to make this addition to what he has advanced, that next to happineſs is a certain ſtate of calm ſerenity; name it apathy it will not be amiſs; it is beſt underſtood when the mind drawing all the neareſt deareſt ties round about it, ſuch as my three children and the friend now preſent, when no beloved object ſeparated by diſtance tears it with anxiety, tortures it with ſuſpence; when, to the reſt of the world, misfortune has taught it to ſay, I am independent of all claims but

on

on Divine Providence ;—to Deſtiny, Spare this little remnant and you cannot afflict me—I ſay, if you will not allow me to call this negative ſentiment by the name of happineſs, I ſhall never be able to tell you of any other by experience.

EMELINE looked on Sir William—He cannot ſtand this, ſhe thought—and now the bleſſed ſecret muſt come out—but ſhe was miſtaken, for, turning to her, he aſked what ſhe would honour with the name of happineſs? She, who underſtood the language of his eyes, and was at that moment too deeply penetrated with the thouſand noble qualities they ſpoke, replied, as if there had been no object on the earth but himſelf, I deſire no happineſs but that of pleaſing you—and——

STOP! ſaid he, kiſſing her hand in extaſy—one word more might ſpoil the whole dear ſentence—and there is no poſſible expreſſion that can add to its graces.

I AM offended, ſaid Mrs. Davenport, not to have been examined before now on your philoſophical reſearches, but I tell you, without being put to the queſtion, that I muſt derive all my happineſs from ſympathy!

IT now only remains with me, ſaid he, to be ſincere as yourſelves, for I know you have all ſpoken the dictates of your hearts; but I will not promiſe to keep, as you have done, within the bounds of natural

natural cauſes. I had laſt night a dream, ſtrictly ſpeaking it was this morning that the viſion was preſented to my fancy, and till every tittle of it is realized the ultimatum of my felicity cannot be aſcertained.

You a dreamer, William!—this was expreſſed both by the lips and the eyes of Lady Gertrude; ſhe looked perfectly ſurpriſed, to hear him talk ſo much like an old woman.

Emeline falling on the boſom of her ſecond mother, cried out, Hear him, hear him! Oh, it is ſo wonderful I am ſure it will come true, I am ſure it will!

Why this extreme earneſtneſs, my child? ſaid her ladyſhip. Why does your boſom pant as if you were aſking me a favour on which your own fate depended?

She is afraid, anſwered Sir William, that you will not let me tell my dream.—Tell it by all means, ſaid ſhe, but do not expect, dear William, that I am to give it all the credit you ſeem to expect. I declare when this wonderful dream was repeated to me juſt now whilſt I was abſent with my daughter, cried, Mrs. Davenport, though I am no viſionary, whether it was owing to the extraordinary matter it contained, or to the natural way in which it was related, it ſtruck me with ſuch a reſemblance to reality,

ality, that I am not aſhamed to ſay, it affected me ſtrangely—it will alſo affect you, my dear friend, you muſt therefore, if you conſent to hear it, arm your mind, and ſo muſt my ſon, with double portions of fortitude, as the chief ſubject of it is your beloved daughter and his beloved miſtreſs.—She paufed—Montague ſighed—Lady Gertrude echoed his ſigh—and deſired Sir William to proceed, adding, that the powers of imagination, however ſtrongly impreſſed, could have nothing to do either in augmenting or meliorating dreadful and deep-rooted certainties.

Sir William claſped the hand of his mother, and preſſed Montague's with affection—involuntary was the motion, inexpreſſible the tranſports which the ſoul, too full of them, ſpread over his whole countenance, and muſt have imparted ſome portion of the ſecret had they been inclined to ſearch for it in his eyes or in his accents.

It was this morning, my dear mother, this very morning, Montague, that I ſuppoſed myſelf at the parſonage, and ſaw there our dear friend Armatage, with his amiable wife, juſt come off a very long journey——I wiſh, my dear ſon, they were in reality returned; ſaid Lady Gertrude, interrupting him—and I ſaw them ſo plainly, he energetically replied, that I would take a ſhilling to five hundred pounds, that in leſs than twenty-four hours you will ſee them at the caſtle. Well, ſaid ſhe, ſhould this happen, I don't know how far I may in future allow your

dreams

dreams to be prophetic. Never, never, he returned, ſhall I have another that will fix itſelf ſo ſtrongly on my mind, or elate my ſpirits as this has done! Do you hear me, Montague, pray liſten, I fear you are not ſufficiently attentive. Pardon me, cried Davenport, I have eyes and ears only for yourſelf.—He ſaid true, for by this time he had perceived the viſible change in the dreamer's whole external appearance; he knew Sir William and his ſiſter had been that morning at the parſonage; he ſaw ſome preparations were intended—he trembled—he had nothing to expect, and could not therefore tell why it was that he did tremble.

My dream was ſo confuſed—it was ſuch a delightful confuſion, continued he, that I hardly know where to take up the firſt thread of the clue. Find it, I beſeech you! eagerly exclaimed Davenport.

My deareſt mother! (addreſſing himſelf to Lady Gertrude, one eye ſometimes caſting a bright glance on his friend), when Armatage abruptly left us, he did not explain on what occaſion he was called ſo ſuddenly away, but made us underſtand that it was on an office of humanity: you read this general reaſon in the letter he left behind him, and prayed, ah, with what fervency did you pray for his ſucceſs! ——I remember it, ſaid Lady Gertrude, nothing diſcompoſed, and my prayers ſtill follow him. Wherever he is, or whatever may be the buſineſs that keeps him from us ſo long, his purſuits muſt ever do him honour.

Sir William had changed his poſition, and was moved behind her chair, that ſhe might not ſee the quick tranſitions of his countenance, of which he himſelf was conſcious. Montague ſat oppoſite to him, with eyes riveted on his face: Mrs. Davenport and Emeline, afraid to look on either party, kept themſelves in the back-ground of this intereſting picture.

Yes, ſaid he, replying to his mother's eulogium on Mr. Armatage, there is no doubt that a petition ſo worthy of yourſelf and of him has been fully anſwered. How is this, my ſon? You began with a dream, you wander from imagination, and ſeem to ſpeak boldly as if aſſured you was treading the ſerious path of certainty.

I may have wandered, dear mother; but thus corrected, you ſhall ſee how ready I am to purſue the right road. I ſuppoſed in my morning viſion, that the affair on which Armatage and his wife have been many weeks abſent was to reſtore a young lady to her friends, whom they have long, too long lamented as being loſt to them for ever.

, Like a flaſh from heaven, light at that moment ſtruck upon the ſoul of Lady Gertrude. Stop! ſhe cried; if I have no concern in the reſtoration, ſtop! but if it is poſſible my angel—my Adelaide ſhould be——She could ſay no more, Sir William had ruſhed forward, he had caught her in his arms, he had

had ſaid to her: It is no dream, my adorable mother! the very arms that infold you have this day ſtrained in their embraces our precious Adelaide!—She uttered a faint cry, and heard no more.

WHAT became of Montague? That is more than I am able to anſwer; for as ſoon as Lady Gertrude opened her eyes to light and happineſs, though Montague was looked for every where, he was no where to be found. This eſtrangement did not occaſion any pangs of bitterneſs to mingle with the ſweets of *eclairciſſement*, becauſe on the firſt mention of a young lady found, who was ſuppoſed to be loſt, he had vaniſhed from the room, not waiting to hear any more; and Emeline had only time to ſay to him, as he paſſed her in the ſwiftneſs of flight—Dear brother, do not ſurpriſe her too much.

THE ice broken, and the path cleared to a meeting ſo extraordinary as that which was ſoon to take place, between a daughter redeemed from the grave and a mother who had never ceaſed to lament her interment—the lover gone, as it may not unaptly be ſuppoſed, to viſit a miſtreſs by whoſe reſurrection alone he could be ſatisfied; and Lady Gertrude, ſo far brought back to her ſenſes, that though ſhe could not underſtand, neither could ſhe doubt—I hope I am not expected to go over again all the grounds I have gone over already, at leaſt, that I ſhall be permitted to make a much ſhorter cut; and inſtead of telling my readers how and in what words the

miraculous circumſtances of this great event were made known to Lady Gertrude, may I not content them by ſaying, that ſhe was acquainted with ſuch of them as were neceſſary to the full eſtabliſhment of her faith, as ſoon as her powers of attention were reſtored? But as many as could be hid of thoſe ſoul-piercing cruelties practiſed by the monſters of the rocks upon the mind and body of her darling child, were then and for ever after concealed from her, beyond the ſcrutiny of penetration to diſcover.

The ſame phyſician who attended at the ſuppoſed death of Miſs Montreville had received a ſummons from Sir William to attend at the annunciation of her reſurrection, and entered the room at the inſtant Lady Gertrude fainted.—To repreſent joy below the ſtandard at which I have ſet it, would be a degradation from the ſpirit, the eſſence of my ſubject, or I could give a very pretty ſketch of what was evinced by one of the moſt humane men that belongs to one of the moſt liberal profeſſions: I would alſo, if it was not for deſcending, be very far from paſſing over in ſilence, as I now muſt do, the general joy of every ſervant and domeſtic in the houſe on this joyful occaſion, from the good and faithful Mrs. Grantley, down to the loweſt helper in the ſtables.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

The ſame horſe does not always win the plate, nor the ſame man always linger behind in a foot-race—The world is a deſert; who would not get out of it if they could?—The world is a paradiſe; who would not ſtay in it if they could?—Deſpair plants it with thorns—Hope ſtrews it with roſes.

SIR William Montreville and Montague Davenport, when boys, had once run for a wager from the caſtle to the parſonage, in ſeven minutes; and Montague only loſt it by ten ſeconds.—What is the ſpeed of emulation to the ſpeed of paſſion? of the tender paſſion, or rather of all human paſſions combined in that one? In the purſuit of fame he could ſhake hands with the rival by whom he was ſurpaſſed, without envy or mortification: but now that he was on his ſecond race to the parſonage, in purſuit of love and Adelaide, he would have cut the throat of that daring mortal who had preſumed to contend with him in ſwiftneſs; and nothing but an

arrow,

arrow from a bow could have left him behind—as that ſpace which in the full exertion of his ſtrength he did not quite compaſs in ſeven, had yet ſomething to ſpare of four minutes when he knocked at the door of Mr. Armatage's houſe.

Stand back, reader, I ſhall not permit you to enter—It is only the ſpirit of truth and the angel of purity that can be admitted to thoſe interviews, where their own attributes are divinely repreſented. I only ſcratched out theſe few preceding lines to be the herald of Montague's fame at a love-race, and am now ſetting out again for the caſtle.

It is very natural to conclude, that the firſt words uttered by Lady Gertrude, after ſhe was able to articulate, were the moſt tender and paſſionate cries for Miſs Montreville to be immediately brought into her preſence. The doctor, who held her pulſe, gently objected to this precipitancy, and declared he could not ſanction their meeting with his concurrence, until ſhe had lain down for an hour or two, and taken a cordial, which he had brought with him, prepared to ſettle her nerves and reſtore her compoſure.—She conſented in part to be governed; for now the world appeared a paradiſe, and ſhe was loth to quit it: but ſtill ſhe would not lie down, nor ſwallow the cordial he preſented, until ſhe had heard her ſon repeat every thing that he choſe ſhe ſhould ever know of that horrible treatment to which her darling Adelaide had been expoſed; and having

alſo

alſo exacted a promiſe, that the moment ſhe felt herſelf equal to ſuſtain the exceeding weight of her felicity, the interview ſhould be no longer protracted. She ſuffered herſelf to be put to bed, and, ſoon after taking the reſtorative cordial, ſhe ſunk into a ſweet and profound ſlumber, from which ſhe did not awaken any more for upwards of four hours.

Do you think ſhe will ſleep long? ſaid Mrs. Davenport to the doctor, on finding that her late agitation had lulled itſelf into a quiet undiſturbed repoſe: will it be ſafe for me to leave her one little hour, to feaſt my eyes on the ſight of that precious being ſo dear to us, ſo unexpectedly reſtored?

You may go with great ſecurity, he replied; her ladyſhip will not come out of this artificial ſleep into which I have thrown her till it is late, perhaps not till the cloſe of day.

Bless me! have you ventured to give her an opiate? I do not remember her to have ever taken any thing of the kind.

Be not alarmed, Madam, I will anſwer for its ſafety, and I hope for its efficacy.

Did you order it at that time when the account reached her of Miſs Montreville's death?

There was no occaſion for it then; violent grief is in its own nature a ſtupifier, and a ſubſtitute for opiates:

opiates: but the lively fallies of joy are attended with ſuch extreme perturbations, that neither the ſenſes nor the life of a patient, in Lady Gertrude's uncommon ſituation, are free from danger until the feelings of the mind are deadened, and the irritation of the nerves ſilenced.

I AM a coward, my good Sir; but your condeſcenſion and ſound reaſoning have convinced my underſtanding, and quieted all my fears. The coach had been at the door two hours, and the ſervants waiting for orders when they ſhould be ſent away to fetch Miſs Montreville to the caſtle. Mrs. Davenport, aſſured that ſhe might go and come back again before Lady Gertrude would awake, flew to the carriage. Scarcely giving time for the ſtep to be let down, ſhe took her ſeat in it, and ordered to be driven, with all poſſible haſte, to the parſonage. The doctor followed to offer her his aſſiſtance; but finding he could not overtake her, he returned into Lady Gertrude's apartment, where on one ſide of the bed ſat Emeline, on the other Sir William, each holding a hand of this dear mother in their own, and watching her ſlumbers with true filial anxiety.

ON a retroſpection of what I have written I charge myſelf with having ſaid leſs of Adelaide, who is the ſoul of my ſubject, than of any other perſons who are only the fibres of it: but can the ſoul exiſt in its priſon of clay without theſe fibres, theſe tenderils that cling around it, theſe tender connexions which it ſupports, and by which it is ſupported?—No!—the example

of

of Adelaide herſelf proves it otherwiſe; for though ſhe had been received into the arms of her brother, her friend, and her lover, yet her impatience was ſo great to be at the feet of her mother, that whilſt acknowledging with noble frankneſs all the obligations ſhe had felt for the unprecedented conſtancy and affection of her amiable Montague, ſhe would cry out, Oh! theſe tedious moments! Where are you, my dear, dear mamma? Why are our friends ſo cruel to keep us ſtill aſunder?—If we die in the embrace they ſo much fear, ah! what a death of pleaſure!—what a death of rapture would it be to your poor Adelaide!

Some exclamation like this had juſt forced a paſſage from her plaintive boſom, when Mrs Davenport ſtopped at the door of the parſonage-houſe, in Lady Gertrude's carriage; and it caught the eye of Miſs Montreville, who cried out, Dear Montague! ſhe is come! ſhe is come!—My love! my life! be compoſed; it is indeed your mother, but not Lady Gertrude.—Will you not allow my mother to be your mother? He could ſay no more—Mrs. Davenport ruſhed in to aſſert her own claims to the title.—He ſpoke, and ecſtaſy once more renewed its reign at the parſonage.

Lately I picked a hole in my own garment, merely to have the pleaſure of healing it over by a philoſophical experiment—The ſoul and the fibres ſuited ſo nicely, that it tempts me to ſuppoſe my

good-natured readers will give me an opportunity of trying my ſkill once more, by calling upon me to explain away what they may ſuppoſe a want of conſiſtency; and aſk why, after bringing ſo much company to the parſonage, I have ſaid ſo little of the dear parſon and his wife. A very plain reaſon, founded in common ſenſe, for this omiſſion, offers to preſent itſelf in my defence; and I ſhall ſeek for no better. —Gratitude has a thouſand tongues, and was ſo buſy in uſing them all whilſt Adelaide's brother, friend, and lover were united in the bands of domeſtic ſociety with the preſervers of Adelaide—that on the one hand, if I had been the amanuenſis to ſet down whatever paſſed in the language of gratitude, my remaining pages would have been filled with little elſe; and on the other, to have given a ſhort ſpecimen of its eloquence, would be to cut off the limb of a well done ſtatue, and thereby deface the beautiful uniformity of the whole.

THERE is alſo a Monſ. Lamotte—that gentleman of the faculty ſo honourably mentioned by Mr. Armatage. As being the partner of their ſearch after Adelaide, and as one of her heroes, he is entitled to much conſideration. So thought Montague. After this friendly foreigner had eſcorted his lovely patient in ſafety to her native village, and partaken of the parſonage hoſpitalities a few hours, family affairs forced him to depart again for his own country, not without an ample recompenſe from Sir William, and a Bank of England note for a thouſand

pounds

pounds preſented to him by the magnificent Davenport; whoſe powers of being generous were, ſince the deciſion of his law-ſuit, equal to the ſpirit of his own liberality, which knew no bounds in rewarding every being who had nearly or remotely aided in the great cauſe of his heart.—To his bounty Richard and Sarah Adams were indebted for the luxury of living without labour—to him, John, the domeſtic of Mr. Armatage owed the means of independance whenever he choſe that ſtate in preference to ſervitude:—and large gifts were ſent by Monſ. Lamotte to the poor Savoyards who had aſſiſted in the reſcue of his ſoul's treaſure.—I mention theſe circumſtances now, that they may have no claim on my time hereafter.

One hour being elapſed in the boſom of domeſtic harmony, the preſiding deities, of which circle were Mr. and Mrs. Armatage—the mother of Montague made a motion to return back to the caſtle, and propoſed that the whole party ſhould accompany her thither. The motion was univerſally approved: Adelaide adopted it with a glowing tranſport of joy, which gave ſuch a divine addition of animation to her always animated features, as much more than realiſed all that has ever been held up by poets, painters, or lovers of ſoul-inſpired beauty.

Only Monſ. Lamotte was left behind at the parſonage, to prepare, by taking ſome reſt, [illegible] fatigues; the reſt all crowded into [illegible]dy Gertrude's carriage.

carriage. Montague, the new-created Montague, for he reſembled any thing in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, rather than his former ſelf, wrapped up his new-found treaſure in many cloaks and great-coats, to prevent the approach of danger, which he now fancied he ſaw ready to aſſail her delicate frame from every point of the compaſs; and as often as he looked upon her, ſpoke to her, or caught the ſound of her voice in its paſſage from his ear to his heart, he would cry out, as doubting the evidence of his wandering ſenſes, Great God! can all this be poſſible?

Lady Gertrude was ſtill ſleeping when they alighted at the caſtle. One of the ſervants had caught a glimps of Miſs Montreville, and had ſpread the alarm to twenty others, that ſhe was come back in the carriage with Mrs. Davenport.—Think! oh my young reader! if you are ſo happy as to have engaged the love and reverence of your domeſtics grown grey in the ſervice of your family, many of whom have been rooted there even before you ſaw the light—if, like Adelaide, you deſerve their warm, honeſt, faithful attachment—if you have her feelings, her tenderneſs, her humility, think what muſt have been the fluttering perturbations of her heart, when on ſtepping from the coach, ſupported by the arm of Montague, ſhe was received by all her mother's ſervants, kneeling on each ſide of the ſteps by which ſhe muſt paſs—all but the good Grantley, who had ventured nearer, and felt herſelf fondly

embraced

embraced in the arms of her young miſtreſs, the moment ſhe was freed from the carriage!—Neither of them ſpoke; for, though grief has the privilege of many words, poor joy is often forced to be ſilent for want of them.—She ruſhed through the other ſervants, ſaying, as ſhe paſſed, Thank you! thank you, my kind friends! I have not yet ſeen my mother; when I have ſeen my mother, I will ſpeak to you all.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

What a phyſician will allow, and what he will not allow—A picture at full length—How many of her days a young lady may ſacrifice to Duty, without robbing Love of his proportion in her fate—Love hypochondrical, or the child of imagination—Bad news—Uſeleſs ſaints, and a ſudden longing after ſolitude.

SIR William and Miſs Davenport had not moved from the bed-ſide of Lady Gertrude, though her ſleep continued calm and unbroken: but the phyſician thought, that, under the care of two nurſes ſo attentive to the repoſe of his patient, his own preſence during her ſlumber might be diſpenſed with, ſo ſtole out of the room, and walked quietly down ſtairs; perhaps to enquire how long it would be to dinner, being already more than an hour paſt his time. —Sorrow and faſting, he would allow, were reaſonable companions; but ſcarcity and happineſs, he thought, were not ſo well aſſorted.

In the hall he was met by the party from the parſonage, juſt as they came out of the carriage—when at the ſight of Miſs Montreville, living well, and under her own roof, a ſentiment of joy baniſhed every idea of feaſting on any food leſs etherial than its own eſſence, or, more properly, its own quinteſſence, from the humane mind of the friendly doctor.——Dear Sir! cried Adelaide, ſpeak to me of mamma! my fond, ſuffering, heart-broken mamma!—Will you hold me any longer in this agony of expectation? Now! now! dear doctor! this moment let me ſee her, or I have only ſurvived in Savoy to yield up my breath on this ſpot.—For God's ſake, let her be indulged, cried Montague, before the judge, who was to decide on the queſtion, had formed an anſwer to the impetuous petition of Adelaide.—He pauſed—What do you think of this requeſt? ſaid Mr. Armatage. If there is danger, it muſt not be granted. —But conſider her impatience, rejoined his eſtimable wife;—obſerve her paleneſs;—ſee how ſhe trembles; —and if it can be done——

It can certainly be done, ſaid the doctor, interrupting her, and taking up her laſt words; but it muſt be done with diſcretion, and in my own way, or I will not anſwer for the conſequences.—He ſpoke thus decidedly, to put his energetic petitioner on her guard, both for her own ſake and her mother's, when they ſhould be preſented to each other, that the ſtrength of her filial paſſions being reſtrained by fear, might not be too violent for their weak and ſhattered

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tered remains of mortality to ſupport the conflict. Yes, ſaid he, you ſhall ſee your mother as ſhe ſleeps —there is yet no fear of her waking—but when you have ſeen her, you muſt my dear young lady, hide yourſelf behind her curtains till ſhe calls for you—on that occaſion I ſhall have the honour to be the Sir Clement Cottrell; and if you do not behave very well when I preſent you to her—if you do not correct this too great ſenſibility—if you do not reſtrain theſe beautiful, but injurious effuſions of nature —depend on it I ſhall interdict your future meetings, till you have both learnt to be leſs celeſtial, and more like your fellow-creatures.

To this converſation ſhe moſt readily liſtened, becauſe it paſſed as he conducted her towards the apartment of her mother, which to gain one hour ſooner than caution might have dictated, ſhe would have ſacrificed all thoſe days of her life which were not to be paſſed in the ſociety of her dear and faithful Montague; nor would the date of her life have been much ſhortened by ſo partial a ſacrifice. She alſo promiſed obedience to all his injunctions; and if ſhe failed in the performance of that promiſe, I would not that it ſhould be called a fault, but a caſualty.

The doctor would let nobody enter with them, for fear of diſturbing Lady Gertrude, whoſe ſleep at this moment was of more conſequence than it had yet been. The Armatages and Mrs. Davenport went into the next room, where the leaſt ſound could

reach

reach them from the bed-chamber; but Montague thought he was in a nearer road to information juſt without that door where he had preſſed to his lips the hands of his charmer, and through which ſhe had entered. Here then he took up his ſtation, his attention ſtrained, his limbs trembling, and his heart palpitating at every ſound, for which he was induſtrious to account by ſuppoſing her to be fainting, in hyſterics, or ſome ſuch misfortune. But had he been permitted to have opened the door, for the better regulation of his ideas, he would have ſeen the moſt beautiful of her ſex in the moſt beautiful of all poſſible poſitions—calm as Mercy, glowing as Spring, bending over the parent of her idolatry—her lovely hazel eyes, ſwimming in liquid rapture, faſtened on the deareſt of her earthly treaſures—her lovely hands, whiter and ſofter than the down of ſwans, folded together, and accompanied by the fervent thoughts of her heart aſpiring to heaven—her muſlin robe, which might have become the ſtatue of Purity—the ſtill whiter hue of her natural complexion, brightened by the warm ſuffuſion of every gratified ſenſation—the profuſion of nut-brown hair, that in the attitude of ſtooping fell upon her boſom, and in part ſhaded her face, adding grace to beauty, and negligence to grace, the only ſhade in the world which a painter would have permitted to ſhade a countenance ſo brilliant in ſentiment, ſo refined by proportion.

The doctor had laid his finger on his lips, as a ſignal of ſilence to Sir William and Miſs Davenport, when

when the angel Adelaide glided, like one of thoſe imaginary beings which are commonly called ſupernatural, to the bedſide of her mother, where at firſt ſhe gently dropped on her knees: but the doctor, who was near her, ſilently ſignified his diſapprobation, by lifting her up; after which, without noticing any other object than her mother, ſhe put herſelf, or rather nature placed her, in the exact poſition I have been trying to deſcribe.

TWENTY minutes did ſhe maintain this poſition without moving, almoſt without breathing, for fear of being forced to quit the rich repaſt on which her affections feaſted; and in that twenty minutes did the perturbated Montague fancy he had twenty times heard her fall to the ground, ſigh, groan, even ſob, as if ſhe had been weeping bitterly; as often did he take the lock in his hand, though a forbidden gueſt, that he might fly to ſupport, to ſooth her—and let it go again, on convincing himſelf, by laying his ear cloſer to the door, that he muſt have been deceived, all then ſeeming to beſpeak a ſolemn ſtillneſs—and even this appearance had ſomething in it that was almoſt horrible to a mind ſo agitated.

WHILST Sir William and Emeline watched the motionleſs Adelaide, (with what love, with what fervency did they watch every turn of her countenance!) Lady Gertrude moved; and the regulator of Miſs Montreville's emotions withdrew her gently from the ſtation ſhe occupied, and made her ſit down behind

behind the curtain, that ſhe might not be the very firſt object for her mother's eyes to fix on, when ſhe ſhould firſt open them—a criſis which he now every moment expected—nor was it many minutes before it happened.

She opened them with a ſigh; and her head being perhaps, at the inſtant of waking, not quite clear from the common effects of the drug ſhe had taken, feeling, as ſhe did, her hand held faſt in Emeline's, ſhe cried out, Oh, merciful God! is it you, Adelaide?—The doctor, who had ſeen and admired how well ſhe could behave, gave her a hint: half a one would have done, though fear ſtill taught her to be cautious: ſinking down, ſhe ſlid cloſe to the ſide of her mother's bed, and letting her face fall on the boſom of that beloved parent, in broken and whiſpering accents tried to ſay—Yes, I am here, mamma—it is your Adelaide—your own———

Silence the moſt awful, the moſt intereſting, the moſt pathetic, that a variety of delightful ſenſations ever produced, interrupted the progreſs of expreſſion, and ſeveral minutes they continued ſtrained in the arms of each other, without any other ſymptom of exiſtence except what diſcharged itſelf from their eyes in ſoft and plentiful ſhowers of tear-created gladneſs—a remedy for hearts too full of exquiſite bliſs, whoſe ſkill was not confined to the body only, but extended to the mind alſo.

WHERE, where is Montague?—were the firſt words uttered by Lady Gertrude. They reached the ear of Montague—who, on hearing the voice of Adelaide, had, unſeen, entered the apartment, and ———But I will not ſay another word—there are certain ſcenes much better imagined than deſcribed, and this is one of them.

WHEN there happens to be only one capital houſe in a country village, particularly if the inhabitants are beloved by their humble neighbours, as the Montrevilles were, every thing of bad or good that betides them becomes a general concern. A funeral from the great houſe is followed by as many ſincere mourners as there are dwellers in its vicinity; becauſe I will ſuppoſe there are none amongſt them who have not been eſſentially indebted to the deceaſed, for endearing acts of kindneſs, hoſpitality, benevolence, or charity. A marriage, a birth, or a chriſtening, in the ſame great houſe, is proclaimed a feſtival, and celebrated with tokens of joy by the ſame multitude; but what is a marriage, a birth, or a chriſtening, when compared to a reſurrection—the reſurrection of ſo divine a being as Adelaide! The pariſh ſteeple announced it—bonfires ſpread their flames far and wide to proclaim it—the old hobbled on crutches, to ſhare the bleſſed news with their ſick neighbour—all that had legs ran on the errand of joy—all that had eyes wept out their meſſage before their tongue could repeat it!

MRS. Jaquiline Vernon was not the laſt to whom report

report conveyed the ſound of this miraculous event —but ſhe was the very firſt who received it ungraciouſly.

SITTING in the bar of her hotel, the ſame ſmith, to whom ſhe was ſo lately an object of terror, now ruſhed fearleſs into her ſerene preſence, and aſked her, as faſt as he could utter, if ſhe had ſeen any thing of Jack Williams and Tim Trot? He had been every where to look for them, and the devil a bell could be rung till they were found.

AND pray, Maſter Tarniſh, what makes you in ſuch a hurry to ſet the bells a-ringing? are any of our neighbours married this morning?

ZOUNDS, Madam! what, han't you heard the good news? toſſing his hat in the air and catching it again; by G——, Madam Vernon, our Lady's fine daughter is alive—ſhe never was dead—though I helped to carry her down to the vault—Miſs Montreville her own ſelf is now at the caſtle with my Lady, and rot me if I ſtrike a ſtroke with my hammer theſe two days!

HE had already ſtruck a ſtroke which nearly felled the ſteady-minded Mrs. Vernon equal with the earth, from whence her delicate particles of mortality were extracted: but he did not ſtay to look at his work when finiſhed; indeed it was not completely finiſhed even after he went away; for, though ſtaggered and very much ſhocked, ſhe was

too

too good a politician to diſcard her ſenſes when ſhe ſtood moſt in need of their cool and free counſel. She placed, as her repreſentative, a female ſervant at the bar, and retired to deliberate on conſequences, ſeeking for this ſalutary purpoſe the moſt ſecret haunts of ſolitude, and found it in a little dark cloſet which ſhe named her chapel; but though hung round with pictures of ſaints, ſhe ſuffered them to decay againſt the damp walls without enquiring into their condition, or ever troubling them with a ſingle petition; and if a perſon ſeldom aſks, they have a ſort of right to ſuppoſe that they will be heard when they do aſk. To this convenient hole for meditation I am going to conduct you, where you ſhall hear whatever ſhe ſays to her ſaints, or whatever ſhe ejaculates to herſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Immoveable Saints—Agreeable cogitations—Disagreeable interruption—Disagreeable reflections—Agreeable compromise—Generosity in a landlord—Submissive landlady, and notable house-wife.

INSTEAD of falling down at the feet of her saints, Mrs. Vernon placed herself very much at her ease in a soft chair, which she had brought long ago into her chapel, that it might be out of the way, being in a very infirm state, though yet equal to sustain her little weight. One of her very sharp elbows fixed itself on a small table, which had made its entrance there for the same reason its old friend and companion, the worm-devoured chair, had been brought into this sanctum sanctorum: from the elbow, by a short ascent, a red scraggy hand rose perpendicular, and offered a pillow of repose to the sallow cheek of its merely skin-covered mistress; whilst her little sharp grey eyes were fixed, not on

the

the ſaints that hung around her, but on a bundle of letters which ſhe had juſt drawn from her pocket.

SOME of them ſhe threw by as unworthy her attention, others ſhe read with avidity; one, in particular, ſhe honoured with a ſecond and a third peruſal; and having ſo done, broke her own mind to her own ſelf in the following rhapſody:—

A HUNDRED a year for my life! to Jacques and Jacquiline Piedmont, for their lives, fifty; provided the ſmuggling buſineſs is never detected! It reads well—but that deviliſh proviſo.——If Miſs Montreville has made her eſcape, there's an end at once of our harveſt, and inſtead of golden collars we may find our necks in hempen halters!

HERE pauſed the fair penitent——it was too much, even in idea, to ſee herſelf, her father and her mother, all ſwinging on a gibbet—ſhe wiped away a tear, and cried out, Bleſſed ſaints! how is this terrible fate to be avoided?—The ſaints on whom ſhe called, either offended at her former neglect, or otherwiſe engaged, made her no anſwer, but ſtuck cloſe to the mildewed wall; nor did ſhe expect that they would come forward to her aſſiſtance: ſo not relying on them for ſupernatural aid, ſhe thought it beſt to depend on her own fertile invention for ſalvation.

NOBODY, ſaid ſhe, can poſſibly ſuppoſe that I have had any hand in this wicked buſineſs—the loſs

of

of the packet having conveniently withdrawn from her memory—and nothing hinders me, if I have a mind, to ſet out directly to tell Madam Johnſon the unlucky accident: but then, what good will ſhe be ever able to do me afterwards?—for if ſhe is not hanged, ſhe muſt go out of the country, and can never ſhew her face in it again as long as ſhe lives; ſo that I don't know which of the two would be the worſt for my intereſt, her execution or her baniſhment.—Beſides, Madam is ſo paſſionate, when any thing does not go the way it ſhould go, that ſhe may do me a miſchief.—When I helped my old lady to make her will, ſhe had like to have killed me in her rage—and ſure enough ſhe would murder me now if I was to ſet off poſt and carry her the bad news.———Another pauſe—and another ſoliloquy.———

Mr. Montague Davenport is the moſt tender-hearted young gentleman that ever was born, and he is my friend, as he aſſured me this very morning, for my attachment to Miſs Montreville; and if I keep my own ſecret, I may find as good a protector in him as in Madam Johnſon, go when ſhe will or where ſhe will; for it would be downright ſhocking if ſhe was to tell the hand I have had in it, when the telling it would do herſelf no good.

Here a gentle tap at the door ſtopped the current of her local meditations—it was only her huſband, to aſk if ſhe could change a ten pound note for a good cuſtomer; and a good cuſtomer being,

amongſt many other good things of which ſhe knew the valſue, though loth to be diſturbed, ſhe would by no means diſoblige—ſo went with Mr. Vernon into the next room, where the money was kept; and whilſt ſhe counted it out, he amuſed her in talking of the great diſcovery that had been made, and how Miſs Montreville's priſon was found out by the parſon, by means of the very packet which Mrs. Johnſon had loſt whilſt ſhe was ſtaying at the Montreville Arms; adding to this intelligence many coarſe and opprobrious epithets, of which Mrs. Johnſon was worthy, but which at the ſame time made the wife of his boſom tremble for her own ſafety.

Foul muſt that wind be which does not fit the tide of fortune in ſome quarter or other; and that blaſt which overſet the whole cargo of Mrs. Vernon's aſſurance, brought to her aſtoniſhed huſband a freightage of kind condeſcenſion from a coaſt ſo unfertile, and from a correſpondent who had never given him reaſon to expect it, that he was hardly perſuaded to believe the compliment was really intended for himſelf. Run, my dear love, ſaid ſhe, give the man his money as faſt as you can; and then my life, come back to me, I have a ſecret to repoſe in your affectionate boſom that very much diſturbs me: you are my only, my dear friend; and if I did not ſeek for comfort in your confidence, where on earth ſhould I find it?——Vernon was a good-natured ſimple fellow; he laughed in his ſleeve at her

tragedy

tragedy countenance, and promiſed to do all that was required of him.

WALKING about, beating her breaſt, and almoſt tearing her hair with vexation, ſhe waited the return of her dear, her only friend; though a friendſhip ſo newly entered into one might ſuppoſe could not carry much promiſe in its aſpect. But whoever had imagined ſo, would have been miſtaken; for when ſhe told her crimes and her troubles—when ſhe aſked his pardon and advice, he generouſly told her, if ſhe would go with him to the caſtle and make a full confeſſion to Sir William, he was ready to forgive and forget; but till ſhe had done this juſtice to herſelf and the Montreville family, he ſhould think her repentance not worth a ruſh candle, and as eaſily put out.

EVERY thing the huſband demanded the ſubtle wife readily agreed to perform, without doing her own delicate or private opinions the leaſt violence, he having fallen into the very trap ſhe had ſet to catch him.—Since this Machiavel had heard of the packet being found, in which her part of the iniquitous project was but too fully explained, her ready wit could furniſh no better mode to ſave her from public ſhame than that of a private and ample confeſſion to the injured parties—not ſo much of her own as of Mrs. Johnſon's guilt; for, by loading her heavily, ſhe hoped to move the lighter under her own burthen; but then it appeared ſo neceſſary that in making this confeſſion ſhe ſhould be ſupported by

the preſence of her huſband, that, to attain her ends, the waſte of ſweets was not conſidered, whilſt ſhe was ſugaring him to her purpoſe.

HAVING talked the whole affair over and over again, though his forgiveneſs was ſometimes mixed with reproaches, they concluded, that the next morning would be the proper time to lay every thing before Sir William. And this evening, to ſhew that we rejoice, ſaid he, with the reſt of the neighbours, and to give the family a good impreſſion of our loyalty, let us throw away a hogſhead of our beſt cyder to their good healths, and the proſperity of Miſs Montreville, who, I have heard ſay, is one of the beſt and moſt beautiful young ladies in the land. Ah Jacq, Jacq! added he, how could you treat her ſo baſely?

THE cyder ſcheme was highly approved by the lady; but to his laſt obſervation, which was not quite ſo well reliſhed, ſhe only replied, that what was done could not be undone; but that if it was to do, ſhe would not be the perſon to do it again. This ſpeech, in the eyes of her cajoled but honeſt huſband, was looked upon an equal act of penitence as if ſhe had put on ſackcloath and aſhes; he gave her a cordial ſalute, and they went down together to add a large piece of beef to the hogſhead of cyder, to do the thing handſome.

CAN you perceive, reader, why I have taken you from the great houſe and carried you to the Montre-

ville Arms, ſtealing you from company you muſt like, and forcing you into compary you cannot approve? I had no other motive in the world for ſo extraordinary a manœuvre, but that of a good houſewife, who may ſometimes wiſh to get rid of her gueſts, that in their abſence ſhe may ſweep her houſe, and refit it for their reception by the time they return to it again. Now, in the ſhort excurſion you have made to Mrs. Vernon's chapel, I have found an opportunity to ſweep out of the caſtle all the tears, ſighs, groans, faintings, ſmelling bottles, and rugged ſentences, that muſt have very much incommoded your ſenſes, had I invited you to return before they were all toſſed out. Of theſe elegant extracts from the book of ſympathy, joy only, eloquent, pure, unadulterated joy, now remains—joy that can ſpeak for itſelf, and is ſtanding tip-toe at the door to bid you welcome.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Enchantments—Enchanted perſonages—Victories and counter victories—Impoſſibility of carving with one hand—Mortality beautified—Ruſtic jollity—A ſtranger, and a ſtrange meſſage.

In times ancient and fabulous, when the world was ſuppoſed to be governed by good and evil genii, it was no uncommon thing to read of palaces transformed into dungeons, and of dungeons turned into palaces: but in theſe times of enlightened rationality a tranſition more lively or more ſudden is no where to be met with than that which in a very few hours happened at the caſtle.

The enchanted lady of this caſtle and her eſquire, the lovelorn Montague, being made priſoners by the tyrant Grief, ſighed away their very exiſtence in his language—fed on his food—ſaw with his eyes, and ſaw that all about them was gloom—heard with his

his ears, and heard nothing but the ſounds of real or imaginary ſadneſs.—The lady of the cavern arrives to their reſcue.—The face of every thing animate or inanimate changes at her appearance.—Grief is taken captive in his turn, and ſent into perpetual baniſhment; unleſs in after times releaſed by a youth as miſerable and as conſtant as Montague, who might chooſe to dwell with him on terms of amity; and ſuch a champion I hope will never fall in his way. The language of joy only could now be heard or underſtood—Cheerful Serenity waited at the feſtive board; and Felicity ſpread it with her choiceſt viands.—Thoſe taliſmans which in the ſtern reign of Grief—thoſe mementoes of beauty and genius heretofore avoided, or looked at with horror by thoſe who had no ſight except what their tyrant forced upon them; theſe lovely pictures, thoſe elegant pieces of pencil and needlework which the very ſervants were wont to paſs by hanging their heads with ſorrow, were now viſited with rapture, and Lady Gertrude herſelf would ſtop at every one of them to point out a thouſand new charms, which ſhe fancied had never been obſerved before—Every hearth blazed with cheerful fires—lamps and candles illuminated thoſe late neglected apartments which neceſſity did not oblige them to occupy, till now excluded by day from the ſun's pleaſant viſitation, whoſe fierceſt beams could not penetrate the ſhutters, which for want of ſpirit, or inclination, the domeſtics ſeldom opened—and where no fire nor candle diſſipated the gloom of night's heavy approach

—where

—where no ſound was heard but that of deſpondency hardly above the note of deſpair, when not pervaded by a chilling ſtillneſs:—it was here that the voice of muſic now found its way—here the fingers of animated beauty flew ſwiftly over the long ſilenced keys of the harpſichord; and here, as Emeline made them vibrate to her touch, Lady Gertrude, ſurrounded by her children and her friends, felt the irritation of her ſpirits yielding to the powers of harmony—a ſeducing ſtratagem of her mental phyſician, not to leſſen, but to meliorate her tranſports.

The ſhock of joy ſhe ſuſtained at the preſence of Adelaide very ſoon diſſipated all the remaining effects of the compoſing draught: ſhe aroſe from her bed with the alacrity of youth, and the vigour of health; and, though flurried to an extreme degree, no arguments were ſtrong enough to contend againſt her ſtronger determination of getting up, and uniting her own felicity with that of her family circle: ſhe had ſeen, embraced, and bleſſed every one of them ſeparately before ſhe attempted to riſe. Oh! in what an agony of gratitude did ſhe expreſs her thanks to God for this great bleſſing, and to the Armatages, as being the agents of his divine mercy! It was the only relief her full heart could be ſenſible of; ſhe indulged in it even to luxury; and afterwards preſided at the table with much more compoſure than might have been expected.

She did not carve indeed—How could ſhe carve, with one hand only at liberty?—Adelaide held the other,

other, and carried that other to her lips ſixty times in as many minutes—Every body had a tongue, eyes, and ears of their own, but theſe three ſenſes were the willing ſlaves of another. Adelaide was the ſubject of all that was ſaid—Adelaide was the ſubject of all that was looked—Adelaide ſpoke; and if an angel would have ſtolen attention from her, he would not have ſucceeded. If any body had a claim to ſhare theſe honours with Adelaide, it was Montague. His reſurrection ſeemed as indiſputable as her own. Something like that great change which we all hope and expect will be ours at the laſt day, already appeared to have been the fate of Montague, and that in the twinkling of an eye he had laid down mortality and put on immortality.

On the evening of this memorable day joy was ſo generally diffuſed through the village of Worthenton, that, though the cellar-doors were thrown open at the caſtle, yet every honeſt cottager was ſo mad to purſue it after his own mode, that the doors were almoſt opened in vain; a few ſtragglers only came to partake of the treaſures of thoſe excellent cellars. Ringing, illuminations, bonfires, and noiſy mirth, the latter of which their reſpect for Lady Gertrude would not let them bring too near for fear of breaking her reſt, determined them to ſtay where they were, with now and then, as a relaxation from the labours of their enjoyment, a trip to the Montreville Arms, where they were nobly regaled by the honeſt landlord and his deareſt life, who hoped

by this liberal atonement her ſentence would be ſoftened when ſhe came the next morning upon her trial.

DURING the hurricane of this ruſtic jollity, when the tower almoſt rocked, from the exertions of thoſe who were reſolved to make the ſound of the bells proclaim as loud as they could the gladneſs of their own hearts—when the village ſeemed in a blaze, and a ſquib or a rocket came hiſſing from the hand of every urchin who could find no better employment—when Mrs. Jacquiline Vernon had filled a glaſs of punch, and was drinking in the midſt of of her numerous gueſts to the very good health of Miſs Montreville, a perſon well mounted rode at a pretty round pace up to the door, where he alighted, and, leaving his horſe to the landlord's card, ſilently followed the landlady, who, having formed no very high opinion of his pretenſions, from obſerving there was no attendant in the rear, would have conducted him to the bar, which was already ſo full that it could ill bear any addition to its contents; but he fruſtrated her intentions, by deſiring, however ſmall the dimenſions, he might have a room to himſelf, and that ſhe would procure him a meſſenger as faſt as ſhe could.—Was it far that he wanted to ſend him? ſhe aſked; or would a horſe as well as a man be required?—No, he replied; it was but a ſtep he had occaſion to ſend him: adding, Make haſte! for my buſineſs is urgent.

SHE civilly told him it ſhould be done; but muttered,

tered, when out of his hearing, Marry, come up! I think you might ſpeak with more manners to your ſuperiors!

It was a more difficult matter to procure a meſſenger on ſuch a night as this than ſhe imagined; one would not go; another could not go; and at laſt ſhe was forced to deſire her huſband to take the office of Mercury on himſelf, telling him that if it was only to the next door, he very well knew how to make it pay.—Though in the main an honeſt man, he, as other honeſt men may be, was favourable to his own intereſt; and taking the hint his wife had given him, he went in to the ſtranger, aſſuring him, with due gravity, that on ſuch a night of general rejoicing, he could procure no meſſenger who would ſtep out of his way for leſs than five ſhillings—He allowed it to be more than enough; and all he could ſay for the exorbitant demand was, that the poor valued their pleaſures as much as the rich.

The perſon to whom this demand and apology were addreſſed drew out his purſe, and, having paid down the five ſhillings, aſked Vernon the cauſe of this extraordinary rejoicing; and, as he explained it, both the diſcovery and the return of Miſs Montreville ſeemed to affect the ſtranger with as great joy as the relater himſelf, or any of his colleagues. The meſſage he had to diſpatch was to Sir William—Let him be told, ſaid he, that there is at your houſe a gentleman who wiſhes to ſhake him by the hand, and whoſe buſineſs with him is of the utmoſt importance.

THE landlord's opinion being by this time totally reverſed as to the dignity of his unknown gueſt, aſked, if his honour had not better ſet it down in writing, as it was late, the evening coldiſh, and the family ſo joyful that perhaps Sir William might not chooſe to come away, unleſs he knew who it was that deſired his company?

THERE is no occaſion for the caution you ſuppoſe neceſſary, replied the other; a liberal-minded man will not refuſe the requeſt of a ſtranger, though his name may be withheld. The landlord was ſatisfied, and, with a low bow, promiſed his honour that he might be ſure of an anſwer in twenty minutes.

A MESSAGE ſo odd, and at ſuch an hour, for it was delivered juſt as the family at the caſtle were ſitting down to ſupper, did not fail to engage more than common attention. Some debating enſued whether the requeſt was or was not to be complied with: but amongſt the number of diſputants, Sir William Montreville remanied ſilent; becauſe, with him, it did not admit of a moment's heſitation to decide the queſtion. He bade the landlord return, and preſent his compliments to the gentleman, and ſay, that he ſhould have the honour to receive his commands in leſs than half an hour. Indeed he would have gone that inſtant, if a cloud of apprehenſion on the face of his mother, and a bluſh of terror on the cheek of his miſtreſs, had not impeded his haſte to take himſelf off before he had reconciled them to the motive of his abſence.

The argument he uſed to accompliſh this great work was as ſhort as he could make it.—Conſider for a moment, ſaid he, the nature of this meſſage. If the perſon who ſent it had not been my friend, he would not have ſaid he wiſhed to ſhake me by the hand—if he had not been diſagreeably circumſtanced, he would not have concealed his name—and if his dilemma was of any but the moſt ſerious nature to himſelf, he would have waited till the morning before he had ſent to me.—Though ſhort his reaſons, they were alſo perſuaſive, and he was at the Montreville Arms within a very few minutes after the meſſenger.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

A magdalen—A fine gentleman—A meeting of friends—Declaration—-Advice—-Determination—-A bell—A horſe—A walk—A preſentation—A hiſtory begun that does not appear—And a book in embryo.

SIR William, in his way to the room occupied by his unknown friend, felt all his warm blood in motion at the ſight of Mrs. Jacquiline Vernon; who, tho' ſhe ſtood in the attitude of a magdalen, with a taper in her hand, and her penitent eyes caſt on the ground, brought afreſh to his mind all the ſufferings of his precious ſiſter, in which ſhe had been a confederate; and made him ruſh by her with an impetuoſity of diſguſt, that gave her no very flattering prognoſtic of the reception ſhe would meet with when ſhe carried all her bundle of crimes, and laid them at the foot-ſtool of his grace and mercy. But where puniſhment is certain in one caſe, and pardon poſſible in another, ſhe was not the woman to relinquiſh a poſſible good for a certain evil.

ANGELS and miniſters of grace! cried Sir William—Fitzhenry! can it be you—Lord Fitzhenry?

Huſh! dear Montreville! Neither my name nor my title muſt be called upon—I am Jack Robertſon at preſent, or any body elſe but myſelf.—The truth is, I am an unfortunate wanderer—Yet bleſſed chance has brought me to the only ſpot under heaven, where, in the joy of my friends, I may poſſibly forget part of my own misfortunes.

WHATEVER is your ſituation, why is it that I ſee you firſt in this houſe, and not at my own?

THERE are reaſons, replied Lord Fitzhenry, and you ſhall know them in time. But now, my warm-hearted friend, let me ſhare with you that joy which is almoſt too much for myſelf.—Who would have thought when I travelled with you from Dover, that the ſiſter you ſo bitterly lamented—the dear, lovely Adelaide, was ſtill living, and that ſhe would be again re-united to her family? Who would have thought, I ſay—Ha! how kind can Fortune be when ſhe pleaſes, and how cruelly the reverſe when ſhe pleaſes not!

You are drawing me, ſaid Sir William, into the moſt rapturous of all ſubjects—the reſtoration of that beloved girl: but we will lay it aſide for the remainder of this interview; for there is another in which I am equally intereſted, and leſs informed. I know that Adelaide is with us. I have no fears that

we

we ſhall ever loſe her again: but I do not know what is the nature of your diſtreſſes, and ſhall have a thouſand fears till you have imparted them to me. If my counſel, my arm, or my fortune, can extricate you out of them—think, that by commanding them you honour me, by refuſing them you inſult me.

One of them I freely accept, replied Lord Fitzhenry, and would do ſo by the whole if I had occaſion for them: but your arm can do me no good, I have made too much uſe of my own already; and as to your fortune, all the ſervice I now have for money is to ſecure me an aſylum in the remoteſt corner of your neighbourhood, and for that my own finances are more than ſufficiently adequate.

Good God! do not ſpeak in parables; let me underſtand you plainly.—You have made too much uſe of your own arm! a corner in my neighbourhood! and not take up your reſidence with me, who am the trueſt, the mok inviolable of your friends!

I know it well, ſaid his lordſhip—then pauſed—but zealous as you are, I will not look upon your innocent family, or my own, which now makes apart of yours, till my fate is more certain. I am a pilgrim, William, branded by ingratitude, and ſtained with blood.

Sir William's hair almoſt ſtood erect, yet he concealed his emotions as well as he was able; and, taking

taking hold of his hand, cried out in the moſt ſoothing tones, This ſeverity on yourſelf is too cruel to him who loves you as a brother! I cannot hear it with patience. However you may have been unfortunate, I am ſure you are not guilty. The errors of inadvertency, and the crimes of premeditation, bear no analogy to each other.

COULD I be of the ſame opinion, Montreville, I might, and with ſome colour of juſtice, reconcile myſelf to my deeds; but a man is always accountable for the madneſs of paſſions who is not totally devoid of reaſon to govern them; and when I drew my ſword on Wardor, I might with more honour have turned the point of it againſt a life far leſs valuable than his I too ſucceſsfully aimed at.

I UNDERSTAND you but too well; Lord Wardor is fallen, and by your hand?

NOT abſolutely dead, yet there are no hopes of his recovery; and it is at that noble and generous enemy's requeſt, now no longer my enemy, that I condeſcended to ſeek my ſafety in flight—a ſubterfuge which does not tally with my own inclinations. He thinks I am flown to the continent—ſo think my father, mother, ſiſters, all of whom I have involved in unutterable affliction: I muſt let them hear of my ſafety from the continent, by incloſing half a dozen letters to a friend, who will do me the kind office of putting them occaſionally into the foreign mail; for if they were to diſcover that I was no fur-

ther

ther off than I mean to go, their fears for me would be fatal; and the title of parricide may be added to that of murderer.—In a few hours they will ſay to each other, By this time our poor wanderer is landed; for they love me more than I deſerve.—But, no, I would have ſacrificed my life, and ten thouſand lives if I had ſo many to diſpoſe of, rather than leave that country which ſtill contains the adorable cauſe of my raſhneſs.

Sir William, who had attentively liſtened, without making any attempt to anſwer, till he ſaw Lord Fitzhenry's fire pretty well exhauſted by his ſubject, now obſerved, that as there might yet remain a poſſibility of Lord Wardor's wounds not proving mortal, he thought it would be unmanly to encourage deſpair rather than hope: beſides, if the very worſt he apprehended were to happen, he bade him conſider he was not the firſt man who, under fallacious appearances, had been betrayed into the error of vindicating his own honour, or puniſhing the ſuppoſed loſs of it in another.—A duelliſt, contiuued he, is a character that of all others has the leaſt pretenſions to the claims of honour or of courage. I wiſh ever to avoid the neceſſity of uſing my ſkill in ſelf-defence; but on any occaſion which made you draw your ſword, I announce that on a ſimilar one mine would have flown from its ſcabbard.

It is only a man of ſpirit by whom a man of ſpirit will be conſoled—and this laſt declaration produced

every

every effect for which it was intended. Lord Fitzhenry began to think himſelf leſs guilty, and of courſe became leſs unhappy.—You know, ſaid he, my dear Montreville, that as we travelled together from Dover, to amuſe or rather add to your melancholy, I gave you the firſt part of my romantic adventures, and explained to you the cauſe of that dulneſs, which you attributed, when firſt we met at Calais, to a concealed and hopeleſs paſſion for your lovely ſiſter: I pulled off the veil from my heart, and made you ſee that Lady Olivia Eglington had no rival there, in the tendereſt and moſt fervent of its paſſions.—My hiſtory ſince that time, I fear, is come nearly to the winding up; nor have I any reaſon to hope that the cataſtrophe will be pleaſant: however if you can find patience to hear as much as I know of it myſelf, it will account for my paſt errors and my preſent ſituation.

Sir William ſtarted from his chair, and, with an affectionate preſſure of the hand that ſignified more than a ſimple approbation of his propoſal—Do you imagine, ſaid he, however diſpoſed to ſelf-gratification, I ſhall for a moment heſitate between that and your accommodation?—No: though I am as anxious to hear as if I only was concerned in the events you have to diſcloſe, I will not liſten to any part of your memoirs till you enter upon them under my own roof, whither I mean to conduct you, and the ſooner we go the better.

Lord Fitzhenry, ſtaring with aſtoniſhment, aſked him if he was diſtracted?

No, ſaid he, my dear friend, I am not diſtracted, but have maturely conſidered your ſituation; and it is the ſentence of deliberation, that you can no where be ſo well concealed as within the walls of the caſtle.—Stop! cried he, ſeeing himſelf about to be interrupted, and with energy—Stop, my Lord! for I will not liſten to your objections till you are convinced whether or not you can build them on a ſolid, or even a reaſonable foundation. My plan is this—I will enter the houſe before you—I leave you at liberty to ſee your relations, and my own, either this night, to-morrow, or whenever you pleaſe: I will not, without your poſitive commands, hint at the reality of your ſituation, not ſo much as to Emeline will I name it, the greateſt proof I can give you of my ſecrecy—I ſay, unleſs you, on a more accurate calculation, ſhould commiſſion me to diſcloſe it.

And how can I do that?—How will that be poſſible? ſaid his lordſhip.

Nothing more eaſy or more natural, replied Sir William. Conſider, this affair cannot be huſhed in ſilence, your aunt muſt hear of it from your mother; and then, what an addition to the anxiety of all your tender relations will it be, to ſuppoſe your ſafety further in danger, by wandering about from place to

place

place in a foreign country! and how much would it alleviate their diſtreſs, to know that you are ſheltered in the very boſom of your own family!

Lord Fitzhenry ſighed, and uttered the name of Lady Olivia Eglington with a pathos that was as eaſily underſtood as the fulleſt declaration could have been of his fears on her account.

Be perſuaded, Fitzhenry, to leave the management of this buſineſs to me, and permit yourſelf to be governed by my counſel to-night. If you'll authoriſe me, I will hint your ſituation to that circle which can admit of no greater addition to its preſent happineſs than the acquiſition of your ſociety, and to morrow ſet off for town—enquire into the exact ſituation of your wounded adverſary—ſee your father, mother, and ſiſters; remove the deepeſt of their diſtreſs, which muſt proceed from not knowing where you are, and how you are: further, if I have your conſent, I will perform the ſame ſalutary office to the haraſſed mind of your Lady Olivia.

No! cried his lordſhip, interrupting him with quickneſs, ſhe muſt not be applied to.—Once ſhe loved me; but that time is over; and the bitterneſs of my fate will never diſturb her felicity.

You certainly wrong her, ſaid Sir William; for, after the firſt part of the hiſtory with which you intruſted me, I will not think, let appearances take

what

what form they may, that ſhe is ſo indifferent to your fate as you ſuppoſe.

I HAVE deſerved, Montreville, by my raſhneſs, by my madneſs, that ſhe ſhould be ſo.

WE will talk more on that ſubject when I have got you at the caſtle.—Dear Fitz. are not my arguments concluſive why you ſhould go there?

IF they do not abſolutely convince, I will allow they have ſtaggered me.

CONVICTION is the next ſtep to doubt.—Come along then, I entreat you—you have given yourſelf a good enough name, and it ſhall not be taken from you—Be you therefore ſtill Jack Robertſon.

BUT is there not more than a chance that I may be recollected by ſome of your old domeſtics who knew me when a boy, ſo many tides as I have ſpent amongſt them with you and Montague? Beſides, when I came with you from Dover, I ſlept there one night, ſo that I think it is impoſſibe they ſhould have forgotten me; though I ſaw, it is true, only your own ſervant on that occaſion, as I now well remember going immediately to bed, and ſetting out in the morning before any of them were ſtirring.

I TAKE upon myſelf, ſaid Sir William, to engage for the fidelity not only of my own man but every

ſervant

ſervant in the houſe. When I call you Robertſon, though they ſhould happen to remember, they will never one of them preſume to know you by any other name.

Lord Fitzhenry dropped the contention, which he had no arguments in reſerve to oppoſe; and Sir William, ringing a bell that hung from the ceiling, ſummoned the landlord, ordering Mr. Robertſon's horſe to be ſent to the caſtle, where that gentleman, he ſaid, would do him the honour to take a bed; after which, ſallying out together arm in arm, they reached what was to be the future priſon of Lord Fitzhenry, juſt as the family had done ſupper, and the ſervants were all gone to theirs.

Sir William, at the requeſt of a viſitor ſo unexpected, firſt made his appearance, and, having explained in very few words as much as he thought neceſſary of his friend's ſituation, opened the door of another apartment where he had left Lord Fitzhenry, who was received with open arms by his relatives, and with all the graces of cordiality by Lady Gertrude and Miſs Montreville.—It was impoſſible that a heart like his ſhould refuſe its confidence to hearts like theirs; ſo that, before they ſeparated for the night, he had told them what he called the firſt part of his adventures, but had neither time nor ſpirits to enter on the ſecond, till ſleep ſhould have enabled him to recount it with ſome degree of compoſure.

It is in this place, reader, that I am forced to make an apology for my own heedleſſneſs—I told you in the beginning of theſe volumes, that I ſhould let you know hereafter what had ſo much diſcompoſed Lord Fitzhenry when he was encountered by Sir William Montreville at Calais. I was really as good as my word: but being no adept in calculation, and this my firſt attempt at compoſing a book, I found, on dividing the fruits of my labour into volumes, that inſtead of two, for which I had agreed with my publiſher, I had ſheets enough ſcribbled over for four, and no other poſſible way of reducing the number than by taking out every word of Lord Fitzhenry's hiſtory: not that I mean to conſign ſuch intereſting memoirs to oblivion; on the contrary, ſhould I continue to feel the hard hand of oppreſſion, the weight of that *unjuſt*, moſt *unjuſt* preſſure which has made me turn novel-writer—Lord Fitzhenry, in two volumes, will produce me at leaſt one ſort of comfort.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

Steadineſs recommended by example—Ardour repreſſed by the repreſentation of kneeling beauty—There is a puniſhment even in this world for the wicked, more bitter than death—The horſes put up—The landlord and the landlady—The interview—The confeſſion—and the ſentence.

SIR William had not made that ſort of vague propoſal of going to town on the affairs of Lord Fitzhenry, which being advanced in the moment of warmth has a ſort of right to evaporate in the hour of deliberation: he was not a man to ſay and unſay, to think and unthink; his word was his bond; and his thoughts were the ſeeds of thoſe good actions which flouriſhed through the whole of his character. —How then could they ever be repented of, or changed for the better?

BESIDES the fulfilling his engagement to take this journey of friendſhip, he had a ſecondary motive

for undertaking it, in which the intereſt of his ſiſter and his own reſentment for the injuries ſhe had ſuſtained were both ſeriouſly concerned. Montague Davenport, whoſe ſpirit was equal to his own, would have taken on himſelf the chaſtiſement of every male who bore the name of Johnſon, and who, by his connection to the honourable infamous enemy of Adelaide, might reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have authoriſed the cruelties of her invention; but Sir William reſiſted this inclination of vengeance with his uſual good ſenſe and ſucceſs. No! Montague, ſaid he, as they debated the matter between themſelves, I muſt not permit you to take the part you have ſo raſhly determined on; Adelaide would not like you the better for dipping your hands in blood, even the blood of her perſecutors.—You know ſhe is mercy itſelf, and that ſhe has entreated on her knees the accurſed Johnſons may receive no other puniſhment than what they muſt naturally feel in loſing that eſtate which they have forfeited their ſalvation to attain.—And can you ſo ſoon forget the firſt petition that came from the gentle ſoul of your reſtored Adelaide—came in the moſt humiliating form on her knees, with energy and with tears?—Are theſe words no more remembered, when, kneeling by her ſide, you promiſed, and I ſwore, ſhe ſhould govern us in all things?

Montague coloured—but it was not the colour of diſmay, it was a flame at which his eyes kindled; and he cried out, There are moments in which I

forget

forget every circumſtance but my love and my revenge.

CHERISH the former paſſion as much as you pleaſe, ſaid his friend, but leave to me the execution of what I have promiſed to perform: through crimes ſuch as theirs the ſhame of detection will cut deeper than the edge of your ſword or mine. I am going to town, and all that expoſure and the law can do ſhall be done; give me your hand—make yourſelf eaſy with this conſideration, that by ſparing their worthleſs lives, of which we have no right to diſpoſe, we ſhall ſink them under ſuch diſgrace as will force them to execrate our lenity, and wiſh for that death which we refuſe them.

THEY were alone when this converſation commenced.—The ladies had ſat up too late the preceding night to admit of early riſing.—Lord Fitzhenry had no inducement to be the firſt in leaving his bed, where he could without interruption indulge his gloomy ideas, and think till his brain grew giddy of Lady Olivia's ſituation, and of the diſtance that divided them. Sir William had riſen to prepare for his journey, expecting to find his travelling-chaiſe at the door, having ſignified his intentions the evening before of ſetting off at eleven o'clock.—In the hall he heard Montague's voice wrangling with his ſervants for being two hours behind the time he had ordered them to be ready:—he heard them anſwer the charge, by ſaying they could not get their horſes

ſhod before, becauſe, the pariſh ſmith being drunk and unable to work, they had been forced to take them three miles to have the ſhoes put on.—Sir William grew ſuſpicious of Montague's ſmuggled intentions: he followed to the place from whence the ſound of his voice had iſſued, and found him juſt aſcending his carriage, which waited for him at the back entrance of the caſtle.—It was here that the debate enſued of which I have given a ſhort ſpecimen; and it ended in their going back together, after Davenport, convinced that he was in the wrong, had countermanded his orders, and given a paſſport for his horſes to march quietly back to their ſtables.—It yet wanted twenty minutes to eleven; and as the gentlemen were walking from one room to another, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon, from the Montreville Arms, ſent in their humble duty, and requeſted his honour would let them ſpeak to him about buſineſs that it concerned him to know.—It was an eaſy matter to gueſs that this buſineſs muſt have ſome reference to the cauſe Sir William was going to undertake; and the plan on which he was to proceed being now decidedly ſettled, both he and Montague thought it beſt to hear what they had to ſay, before the former ſet out on his journey; and orders were accordingly given for their admiſſion.

On their way to the caſtle this idea occurred to the ever-conſiderate *maitreſſe d'hotel*, which ſhe alſo communicated to her huſband, that, though the packet had been found, it muſt have lain ſo many months

months in the wet graſs (for ſhe had heard of the very time and ſpot on which it was picked up), it was likely the writing would be greatly damaged, and her name might have luckily fallen to decay; for ſhe did remember, ſhe ſaid, it was only mentioned in one part; ſo that if but that little ſcrap of paper was, as ſhe prayed and hoped it might be, rotted by the rain and froſt and ſnow that had fallen upon it, there was no other evidence to impeach her, and ſhe ſhould yet come off with flying colours.

Why! ſure you don't intend to deny the hand you have had in it, ſuppoſing it ſhould be as you obſerve?—Look ye, Jacq, if you don't impeach Madam Johnſon and yourſelf, de ſee, I will not go a ſtep further, or ever live with you again as long as I do live.

My deareſt love! ſhe replied, with one of her ſweeteſt looks of cajolement, God forbid that I ſhould conceal the faults of Madam Johnſon! and I would confeſs my own as freely if there was any occaſion for it; but, my life! my joy! would you have your own dear wife accuſe herſelf if nobody elſe is able to accuſe her?

That am I, Jacq, and if you go from your promiſe you ſhall find me both able and willing.—How the dickins can you blow Madam Johnſon without blowing yourſelf?

Oh you hard-hearted man!—Well, you ſhall have your way yet, for all that. It will be a nice thing if my name ſhould be loſt in the ugly packet, as then my confeſſion, you know, would come ſo much handſomer than if I made it out of fear rather than out of juſtice or repentance: ſo when I begin to ſpeak I deſire you will not ſay a word of the packet; for whether my name is there or not, I need not make out as if I knew any thing of the matter; and the duce is in it if ſo generous a confeſſion as I ſhall make does not rub out the whole ſcore of ſin, let it be ever ſo heavy.

There was no time for the landlord to make a reply; they were juſt arrived at the door as ſhe ſoftly uttered the laſt ſagacious obſervation.

When Sir William commanded that they ſhould be admitted, he and Montague left the breakfaſt-room where the ladies would aſſemble, that they might hear and aſk queſtions with the greater liberty; as in the preſence of his mother he would have dreaded that even the ſubject of Adelaide's ſufferings ſhould have been touched upon ſo ſoon after the violent attack her ſpirits had ſo lately encountered.

There are few deſigning people ſo conſiſtent in their art as Mrs. Jacquiline Vernon. The deepeſt plots that ever appeared ſince the creation of the world—myſteries which have employed many heads

to

to accompliſh, have ſo much leſs holding together, that if people would give themſelves the trouble of trying, it might not be half ſo difficult to untwine their inconſiſtencies, as it would have been to detect the more guarded though leſs ſenſible miſtreſs of the Montreville Arms. The confeſſion ſhe intended to make is an excellent example, and I wiſh it were better followed—that of revealing ſtratagems when no greater miſchief can be done by concealing them.

I HAVE been, ſaid ſhe, falling on her knees to Sir William, and pouring out abundance of ready tears, not ſpringing from her heart, but pumped up with great force from the ſtreams of her overflowing imagination—I have been, Sir William—Oh Mr. Davenport! I have been, as my huſband can tell you, the moſt guilty and the moſt miſerable woman that ever exiſted! Seduced by thoſe who ſhould have taught me better, oh Sir! oh gentlemen! I have done a deed—

No more of your preambles, cried Sir William, haughtily interrupting her.—I know by your infamous mother's letter to the more infamous Johnſon, the nature of your crime.—Say how you came to league with your infernal miſtreſs in a plan ſo diabolical.—And was you too concerned in it? turning to the terrified huſband of his proſtrate penitent.

No, Sir, I was not.—And I can boldly ſay the word, he replied, with a modeſt but undaunted voice, which

which fully cleared him in Sir William's unbiaſſed judgment; and perhaps, added he, if it had not been for me, the poor ſoul, penitent as ſhe is, would never have ventured into your honour's preſence—but I have made her ſwear to tell you all that ſhe knows; and afterwards I do depend on your honour's mercy to forgive the poor dear creature, who would never have ſinned if ſhe had not been tempted by that devil of a lady Mrs. Johnſon, though I ſay it who ſhould not ſay it, becauſe it is like ſounding my own praiſes.

Mrs. Vernon's tears increaſed at the abundant ſympathy of her good man; but Sir William and Montague, impatient to diſcard them, did not give her time to indulge her ſuſceptible heart in this ſoft temporary relief: they ſternly demanded a full account of the intrigues to which ſhe had been privy, before they would decide whether ſhe deſerved pardon or puniſhment.

Her confeſſion was uſhered in with a ſigh as deep as her deceit.—Nobody knew how to tell a tale to her own advantage better than ſhe did.—It was introduced with a ſhort pathetic deſcription of the diſtreſs, poverty, and miſery—portionleſs of every thing but virtue—from which ſhe was redeemed by the charity of her patroneſs, and for which her too grateful heart taught her to think no ſervices difficult enough to prove the ſenſe ſhe had of Mrs. Johnſon's goodneſs to her; and, after white-waſhing

herſelf

herſelf with amazing ſkill, ſhe dipped her bruſh in another compoſition, and as a contraſt to her own purity, ſhe daubed Mrs. Johnſon ſo completely black, that juſtice nor the genius of malignity could have made her hue one ſhade deeper.—But not having room to admit the whole of her evidence, I mean to curtail it under thoſe heads of which alone my readers are hitherto in the dark.

THE firſt time, ſhe ſaid, that her lady ever ſpoke to her on the wicked ſubject of aſſiſting to ſteal away Miſs Montreville, was when ſhe came down to the caſtle after the death of Mrs. Ofmond; but ſhe forgot to ſay, that to enjoy the pleaſures of this life a little longer than Mrs. Johnſon's rage on account of the will ſeemed to promiſe ſhe ſhould do, ſhe was herſelf the contriver of the whole plan, and guaranteed for the aſſiſtance of her father and mother; to whoſe horrid habitation, in the rocky receſſes of Savoy, the poor Adelaide was afterwards conveyed.

BEING aſked if all the Johnſon family were concerned in the iniquitous buſineſs, ſhe ſhook her head, and poſitively declared, all but Madame were ignorant of the tranſaction, who had often ſaid ſhe would not let any of her family know it for all the world—that her huſband and daughters did verily believe Miſs Montreville was dead and buried; becauſe, when Madame carried her away, ſhe ſaid it was to change the air for a night or two, as ſhe thought the

young lady had ſome ſymptoms of a decline. My parents were appointed to meet them at ——, and to eſtabliſh themſelves in a neat houſe, where Madame pretended to go for lodgings; and on the morning ſhe went away before Miſs Montreville awoke.—She took with her the corpſe of a young woman who had juſt died in the hoſpital, and whom my mother bought of the nurſes for a certain ſum of money: this corpſe rode in the coach between Madame and Mrs. Davis; for ſhe was forced to have her woman in the ſecret.—The body was of the ſame ſize with Miſs Montreville; and when dreſſed in her clothes, Madame aſſured me nobody could have ſeen any difference between them, except what death might have been ſuppoſed to make. Madame made a great outcry when ſhe came home, about her couſin having died ſuddenly on the journey; and her family having a natural antipathy to ſeeing a dead body, none of them would come near it but Mrs. Davis, or at times Madame herſelf. Several of the faculty who had never ſeen Miſs Montreville were called in, and pronounced her to have been dead many hours.—The body afterwards lay in ſtate, but ſtill the family never went near it; ſo that the cheat very naturally paſſed off without detection.

When queſtioned reſpecting her own nightly viſitations to the church, Mrs. Vernon ſaid that was another of Madame's wicked commands which ſhe was obliged to execute; and explained it after this manner:—that before Madame left the Montreville Arms, it began to be talked of how his honour intended

tended to build a fine monument over the grave of his ſiſter; upon which Madame's guilty conſcience made her afraid that ſome curious body might take a look at the inſide of the coffin; by which idea ſhe was ſo much alarmed, that ſhe made her kiſs the book, to go every night, when the work-people were gone, and the neighbours at reſt, to ſee that all was ſafe, and that the vault had not been opened: her laſt words, ſaid ſhe, when Madame went away from our houſe, after the interment, were—Remember your oath and the monument. Mrs. Vernon alſo added, that when the work began, the fear of being forſworn made her diligent to perform what ſhe had promiſed; but it was ſo difficult to find a key by which ſhe could let herſelf into the church, that ſhe had written to know of Madame how it was poſſible to procure one, when in the mean time the ſexton's wife called at her houſe, and ſhewed a new key ſhe had juſt brought home; becauſe ſhe had dreamed the old one was loſt—that ſhe contrived to get poſſeſſion of it without being ſuſpected; and afterwards ſo ſcrupulouſly acquitted herſelf of the oath, that it was a comfort in all her misfortunes to think at leaſt a religious duty ſo ſerious had not been broken.

Sir William heard all this, and twenty times more than I have ſet down: he was not diſpleaſed, nor did Montague feel diſſatisfied, to find that neither the huſband nor ſon of Mrs. Johnſon had been concerned in the colluſion. The landlord was conſidered by them as an honeſt man; and when Sir

William

William pronounced her ſentence of baniſhment from the Montreville Arms, and the pariſh of Worthenton, he comforted the poor man with much kindneſs, and remitted him a whole year's rent, on the conſideration that he was obliged, by the crimes of his wife, to quit his reſidence ſo haſtily.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

A laſt dear hindrance—Not at home—A billet—Paſſionate exclamation—Difference of opinions—Paternal interference—Maternal harangue—Filial ſtoiciſm—Morning viſitors—The anſwer—The arrival—and the elopement.

SIR William Montreville alighted at the door of Lord Uxington, in Piccadilly, about twelve o'clock on the day following that on which he took his departure from the caſtle, which he left at a much later hour than he intended, owing to the long conference he granted reluctantly to his diſcarded tenants, and one infinitely longer, which the little idler Love moſt willingly granted to him, by ſending Emeline to the breakfaſt-room before he had quitted it.—They had ſtill a thouſand things to ſay; and theſe thouſand things, without their knowing it, were repeated over a thouſand times.—By which

laſt

laſt dear hindrance he did not get to Lord Uxington's ſo ſoon as he might have got there by at leaſt four hours; but had he aſked admittance ſix hours before, it would ſtill have been too late; for the family were all gone out of town. The villa to which they had retired was only twelve miles diſtant; and thither he meant to follow them, as ſoon as he had refreſhed himſelf at Lothian's hotel, and ſet ſome affairs *en train*, that they might be the more ſpeedily finiſhed at his return. It was not his wiſh to be detained one unneceſſary moment in London; for where the treaſure is, there will the heart be alſo.

WHILST Sir William's breakfaſt is preparing, we ſhall ſee him ſet down at a little table by the fire-ſide, and produce the following laconic note to the Honourable Mrs Johnſon:

Madam,

FAMILY affairs, which it is neceſſary ſhould be diſcuſſed in your preſence, bring me to town.—At what hour this day or to-morrow will you admit me? be ſo good as to name it by the return of my ſervant.

I have the honour to be

WILLIAM MONTREVILLE.

WELL!

WELL! cried Mrs. Johnſon, who opened this note in the preſence of her whole family—Well! to be ſure, miracles, as fools ſay, will never ceaſe.—What's the matter? ſaid her ſon, Edmund—you look as pale as if you had ſeen the ghoſt of old mother Oſmond.—Why! think of his impudence, ſhe replied; only think of Sir William Montreville's impudence! and ſhe threw his note on the table.—I receive him!—Yes, to be ſure,—I ſubmit to hear his odious family affairs diſcuſſed!—a very likely ſtory!—A fine requeſt, truly, after their ſlights to me, when I had taken ſo much pains about that girl, who, firſt and laſt, has broke my reſt more than all my other troubles!

DURING her unfiniſhed exclamation, every word of which was pointed by rage—huſband, ſon, and daughters had ventured to inſpect the note; but Edmund only dared to ſpeak upon the ſubject of its contents.

I THINK it, Madam, a very gentlemanly requeſt; and that it requires a very civil anſwer.

YOU think!—What right has any body to think of the Montrevilles but myſelf? they are my relations; and nobody knows ſo much about them as I do.

THOUGH you forbid me to think, the law, my dear

dear Madam, allows me to act; and if you are averſe to writing, I will myſelf have the honour to carry your meſſage and invitation to Sir William. I ſhall ſay you deſire to ſee him at dinner, and that he will take up his reſidence in your family as long as he ſtays in town.

CARRY him that—impertinent puppy! ſhe cried, and flung a diſh of half-cold tea in his ſelf-ſatisfied countenance.—The two girls ſcreamed, and ran out of the room; Edmund ſmiled, took up a napkin, and wiped the drops from his face and clothes very deliberately, then aſked if ſhe had any other commands for Sir William.—Yes, ſaid ſhe, and hit him a ſharp blow on the cheek.

MR. Johnſon, the trembling huſband of Mrs. Johnſon, in a ſqueaking voice, not much above that of a child's cry in the firſt hour of its birth, endeavoured to reſtore peace by half-formed admonitions to his refractory ſon of the duty he owed his mother. —Sir, ſaid ſhe ſternly, who is it that deſires your interpoſition between me and my children?—Wretch! (turning to Edmund) do you ſee how you expoſe your father—poor man! he is not able to ſpeak ſo as to be underſtood; becauſe you have robbed him of his ſenſes:—but hear me; for I have not loſt mine.—You never go to Montreville except it be to fight him, as I would have had you done long

ago;

ago; nor ſhall he come to this houſe while I am miſtreſs of it.—Take care, boy, what you do to offend me.—Ruin hangs over your head; and though it may cruſh my own, there it ſhall fall if ever again I hear you preſume, in my preſence, to name William Montreville as a relation, friend, viſitor, or by any other appellation than my enemy, your enemy, and the enemy of my houſe!

EDMUND, who had during this harangue been adjuſting his diſcompoſed externals before a large pier-glaſs, turned, on ſuppoſing it concluded, that he might be ready with a reply extemporary; for on no occaſion was he addicted to ſtudy. But the entrance of ſome young men whom he had invited to breakfaſt, and afterwards forgot that he had aſked them, fruſtrated his intended repartee, and for the preſent put an end to any further contentions. Mrs. Johnſon ſmiled; Mr. Johnſon recovered his ſmall portion of eaſe and motion; the Miſſes returned with an addition of rouge on their faces; and Edmund was as unconcerned, gay, pert, and inconſiderate, as if nothing had happened out of the common way. Soon after a ſervant came to aſk if there was any anſwer for the man who brought Sir William Montreville's note, and who waited below very impatiently, as his maſter was going out of town immediately.

WAIT till I have written an anſwer, ſaid the re-

animated

animated lady. The ſervant ran to fetch the writing materials; but ſhe bade him let them alone; and wrote with a pencil on the cover of his own letter theſe words——

THE Honourable Mrs. Johnſon has nothing to do with any family affairs but her own.—She will not be at home to-day, to-morrow, or *ever*, to any body who bears the name of Montreville.

THOSE who have done no wrong live in the conſcious ſecurity of their own uprightneſs; and are therefore ill-prepared for the ſurpriſes of ſuch events in fortune as they have not deſerved, and cannot expect; but it was not thus with Mrs. Johnſon. There are deeds worſe in their intentional conſequences than murder itſelf; and with ſuch deeds her conſcience was ſo heavily laden, that ſhe really did live in perpetual expectation of every evil which might follow the detection of them.—Certainty is no certainty when a wicked action, however aggravated by the greateſt complication of cruelties, is not finally completed by death. Mrs. Johnſon thought Miſs Montreville as ſecure in the mountains of Savoy as if ſhe had ſigned the fiat for her execution. But ſtill a poſſibility remained with her exiſtence; and Mrs. Johnſon's imagination being remarkably irritable, it is no wonder that a note from the brother of her priſoner ſo oddly worded ſhould be ſo oddly received;—

received :—ſhe was angry, ſhe hardly knew for what :—ſhe was alarmed, ſhe did not know why :—ſhe looked for dangers ſhe could not foreſee, and hoarded ideas ſhe could in no manner aſſort, till Mrs. Jacquiline Vernon came to her aſſiſtance ; who, having quarrelled with her deareſt life in their way from the caſtle to the Montreville Arms, becauſe he was turned out from the hotel, packed herſelf up in the ſtage-coach, with a cargo of ſome truth and many lies. She made her appearance before her former patroneſs like another Niobe, diſſolved in tears, for their common calamity, juſt three hours after Sir William's billet had been ſo contemptuouſly returned with the pencil inſcription on its cover.—Poor lady! the ſight of this dear confederate, in her preſent ſtate of undefinable ſuſpicions, only ſerved to bring all her fears into one focus, and to confirm them.—Nothing in the interview between the relator and Sir William Montreville was omitted, except only what would have done the confidante's plan of amity no ſervice. Her intereſt was now more than ever attached to the fortunes of her former miſtreſs, whom ſhe had no difficulty to perſuade that they ſhould breathe much freer in any other air than in England, and go about more at their liberty till the affair was blown over. Once convinced that Jacquiline's ſyſtem was literally a ſafe one, Mrs. Johnſon adopted it ; and, being amply provided with the means, the next day, whoever had thought it worth their while to purſue,

would

would have found them embarked on board the Dover packet, and failing before the wind on their paſſage to Calais.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

Rational contempt—Villa anecdotes—A morning drive—Viſiting ticket—The viſit—Ecclairciſſement—A ſon's gratitude—and a mother's wages for iniquity.

SIR William, ever anxious, when he made himſelf the meſſenger of pleaſant news, to convey it with all poſſible diſpatch, waited impatiently for the return of his ſervant, to ſignify when Mrs. Johnſon would accept his offered viſit, before he ſet out for the villa of Lord Uxington; as by her appointment his motions would ſo far be governed, as to determine him whether he was to ſleep at his lordſhip's that night, or return to town for an early conference the next morning—At laſt came her inſolent anſwer, written on the back of his own billet. He received it with more than ſurpriſe—he was aſtoniſhed at her effrontery—he read it with the contempt

tempt it deſerved, and ſaw by the trembling formation of every letter a ſtrong picture of her mind's confuſed perturbation:—he would take no further courſe with her that day; but on the next he determined to purſue another, which ſhe ſhould not have it in her power to elude—and leaving a letter behind him to fix the attendance of his lawyer at a certain hour, he paſſed the remainder of the time which intervened in the ſociety of Lord Fitzhenry's family, of whoſe members I ſhall give but a ſhort ſketch, as they will make full length figures in the memoirs of Lord Fitzhenry himſelf.

The father of this family was what the father of all families ſhould be—neither profuſe to the injuring his younger children's future proſpects, nor ſparing any thing where to ſpare would have added no luſtre to his character—a happy marriage between œconomy and liberality.—Lady Uxington reſembled her ſiſter in every thing but age, being ten years older than Mrs. Davenport. In their children there was not the ſame difference, the Counteſs being ſeven years a wife before ſhe became a mother.—Lady Elizabeth and Lady Jemima Fitzhenry were handſome; but beauty was the leaſt of their endowments.

Sir William found this little intereſting family-group as he expected to find them; that is to ſay, lamenting over the fatal effects likely to enſue from the

the *rencontre* between Lord Wardor and Lord Fitz-henry; but ſtill more deeply overwhelmed with fears and cares for the perſonal ſafety of the latter, who had torn himſelf from their embraces, under all the agonies of torturing remorſe, without being able to decide whither he ſhould go, or when ſee them again.

At all times Sir William Montreville would have been a welcome viſitor.—But gueſs how he was received, careſſed, almoſt adored, as he ſecretly fed their greedy ears with the ſweet ſounds, that the deareſt object of their ſolicitude was well, calm, and ſheltered—ſheltered in the very heart of friendſhip, of affection, of harmony like their own! Nothing could equal the warmth of their gratitude; but to increaſe their ſatisfaction, Sir William had, before he left town, ſtopped at Lord Wardor's door, where he had ſpoke to the principal ſurgeon, and learnt from him, that though the wound appeared to be mortal for eight-and-forty hours, by the extraction of a ball that morning, and other favourable ſymptoms, he was tempted to believe it rather more than a deſperate poſſibility that his lordſhip might yet do well.

Sir William having given them ſo much cauſe to rejoice, and rejoiced with them, on theſe new unexpected flattering appearances of the preſervation of a life ſo valuable as that of Lord Wardor—he beſpoke

beſpoke their attention to his own affairs; and as he unfolded the miraculous circumſtances of his ſiſter's reſtoration, and as they heard him ſpeak of the vile Johnſon, the mountains, her impriſonment and deliverance, they were almoſt ſuffocated with various emotions of joy, terror, horror, and aſtoniſhment. Lady Elizabeth, who loved, who had deeply mourned the ſuppoſed death of Adelaide, actually fainted, and fell from the chair on which ſhe was ſitting.

Day broke upon the happy circle, and found them ſtill together—ſtill engaged on the ſame ſubject. Sir William lay down for two hours; then, before any of the family had left their beds, he ſet out for town to meet his lawyer, but not till he had obtained a promiſe from the father, mother, and ſiſters of Lord Fitzhenry, to witneſs the completion of his own, and perhaps of Davenport's happineſs; for, added he, whilſt making the requeſt, when I am bleſſed with the hand of Emeline, my ſiſter muſt be ſtrangely altered if ſhe refuſes to beſtow hers on Montague.

In the progreſs of his morning excurſion, he ruminated the whole way on what he had heard from Lady Uxington, reſpecting the object of her ſon's affection. I have ſaid nothing of the private moment ſeized on by the Counteſs to mention her fears on Lady Olivia's account, or what was the ſort of confidence ſhe repoſed in Sir William; it has nothing to do with this hiſtory, and is reſerved for another: though,

though, ſoon after he reached London, every particular circumſtance I have omitted was carefully conveyed to his friend Fitzhenry, through the medium of Lady Gertrude; under whoſe cover, for obvious reaſons, he thought proper to incloſe his letter.

Sir William, on entering his apartment at Lothian's hotel, enquired if any body had been there to aſk for him? The waiter ſaid, Yeſterday there had a gentleman called, and left his name—begged pardon for not laying it on the table, and ran down to fetch it. The ſlip of card announced Mr. Edmund Johnſon; and the next moment Mr. Edmund Johnſon himſelf was announced *in propria perſona*. His gay, vacant, boiſterous countenance would have confirmed him innocent of his mother's machinations, if there had been no other evidence in his favour. Surely, thought Sir William, nobody will accuſe thee of being in a plot; and received him with as much civility as if he had been the ſon of any other woman.—Poor Edmund, who would have been very well inclined, if he had had more ſenſe and a better education than fell to his lot, was determined, in ſpite of his mamma, for whom he cared about as much as for his own temporal or eternal welfare, to pay the greateſt reſpect to any part of the Montreville family, whenever they came in his way; and ſuppoſing ſhe had ſent no anſwer to Sir William's note, being at another part of the room when ſhe wrote with her pencil, he did exactly what he had threatened, and called at the hotel five minutes after his relation had left it. The latter had mentioned the time he ſhould return; and Edmund was in ſo great

haſte to do the thing cleverly, as to leave his father's houſe before the elopement of his mother had been diſcovered by any part of the family.

I AM heartily glad to ſee you, Sir William—upon my ſoul I am! ſaid Edmund, ſhaking him as heartily by the hand—and if my own houſe was finiſhed, which the workmen have been a deviliſh while about, you ſhould have no other home: but as I cannot help their dilatorineſs, why we muſt make the beſt ſhift we can; and I am come to fetch you away to my father's, who will not hear of your ſtaying another day under any roof but his own.

BUT, Edmund, replied Sir William, what ſays your mother? do you bring me no compliments from her? I am much obliged to your father, ſo I am to yourſelf; but do not flatter me with a good reception from Mrs. Johnſon, if you are not very ſure ſhe will realize it.

SURE ſhe will realize it? he repeated, a little ſtaggered by the queſtion. Am I ſure of any thing? why you will not have been half an hour in the houſe before all the old grudges will be forgot; and ſhe will tell you herſelf how glad ſhe is to ſee you.

STILL I doubt, ſaid Sir William, drily.

HANG doubts, replied the weak giddy ſophiſt—Do as I have done—away with them. I had never any peace till my doubts were all diſcarded.

IT is poſſible, ſaid Sir William gravely, that with your

your doubts you may have diſcarded certainties, and will be glad at ſome future period to recall the fugitives.—Read this, and convince yourſelf that I am not too credulous in doubting Mrs. Johnſon's ſincerity.

EDMUND was abaſhed when he ſaw under his mother's hand ſo flagrant a contradiction to all his flouriſhes: but ironically obſerved, her likings or diſlikings did not ſignify two ſtraws to any body but his father; adding, If you go back with me, I will ſoon enough ſhew you the difference between writing and doing with my mother.

THAT I cannot poſſibly do, ſaid Sir William. I ſhall ſtay only a few hours longer in town. My mother—he pauſed—and my ſiſter are expecting me at home.

BY Jove! a pretty idea, Montreville.—Pray is it *ton* to call her ſiſter, who, if ſhe was your ſiſter, would knock all your pleaſent love-ſchemes in the head?

How do you underſtand me?

WHY, I hear you are going to tie yourſelf up; ſo that it muſt be Miſs Davenport who is expecting you at home.

UPON my honour you are miſtaken; I literally mean my ſiſter.

HUM-BUG! cried Edmund. I have ſome reaſon to know you have no ſiſter, at leaſt on your mother's

ſide.—Let me die if I was half ſo happy at being heir to the only ſiſter you ever had, as ſorry for the loſs of Miſs Montreville; ſhe was a charming creature! I wiſh ſhe had lived with all my heart; there would have been enough for us both one way or the other.

If you are ſerious, you muſt allow me, ſaid Sir William, to put your ſincerity to the teſt—Suppoſe it poſſible Miſs Montreville ſhould be living, could you relinquiſh her grand-mother's eſtate with as much pleaſure as you have hitherto poſſeſſed it?

Then by Jupiter and all his train of ſatellites I ſwear, replied Edmund, laying his ſpread hand on his breaſt, if on that condition ſo lovely a woman could be handed back from her dark diſmal habitation, ſhe ſhould not only have her own eſtates, but mine into the bargain!—I can't well ſay more, becauſe I ſpeak the truth from my heart—or offer leſs, for, as long as dad lives, my eſtate is neither here nor there.

You convince me, ſaid Sir William, of your diſintereſted ſpirit, and I ſhall be ſorry to wound it through the iniquities of your mercenary mother.—He then as gently as the nature of her crimes would admit, opened Mrs. Johnſon's intrigues, and their conſequences. Edmund liſtened with his uſual nonchalance, till aſſured Miſs Montreville was actually in the land of the living; when by every poſſible expreſſion of boiſterous joy, he eſtabliſhed the rights of honeſty over policy, and gave Sir William a bet-

ter opinion of his good nature than he had ever entertained of his underſtanding. About this time the lawyer arrived, in conſequence of Sir William's appointment; and what little matters remained to be ſettled between two parties ſo well agreed on the main point, were left to his adjuſtment.

EDMUND engaged that his father ſhould pay all the arrears due; being himſelf too buſy in ſpending what was left of them to enter into the buſineſs of replacing the whole. All that he obſerved upon his mother's conduct, and in a tone perfectly *deſœuvré*, was calling her a fine old *quiz*, and ſaying ſhe deſerved to be hung.

BESIDES ſettling this affair of his ſiſter, Sir William on the ſame day executed another, which he knew would be well received by his friend Fitzhenry; and the ſucceeding one ſet out on his return to the caſtle, but not till he had heard of Mrs Johnſon's elopement, attended by the *ci-devant* miſtreſs of the Montreville Arms. This intelligence Edmund himſelf, with the greateſt glee in the world, communicated in a ſecond viſit to Lothian's hotel, made for no other purpoſe than to laugh at his mother.

IN this ſhort abſence of Sir William from the caſtle, ſo different were the ideas of the brother and ſiſter who remained behind, that Emeline fancied ſhe ſaw thoſe clouds of gloom again hovering about it that had ſo lately obſtructed the entrance of all cheerful images; whilſt on the contrary Montague, the faithful lover of Adelaide, called it the palace

of Delight, and found nothing wanting where the deity herſelf preſided.—Emeline too began to think ſome ſpell muſt have been caſt before her ſight, as ſhe owned the ſame evening on which Sir William came back to the caſtle, that ſhe had never ſeen it look half ſo pleaſant.

CHAP. XXXI.

Who are the founders, and who the builders—Something elſe—and the wearied traveller—Hymen's beſt feſtival—Premature information—The open carriage—The cottage—The propoſal—And the rejection—Mixed medley—A ſhort obſervation—And my own laſt ſpeech.

LADY Gertrude, perfectly ſatisfied with every thing done by her ſon, in eſtabliſhing the rights of his ſiſter, gave herſelf up entirely to the rapturous contemplation of the felicity to which ſhe was reſtored: friendſhip and maternal love ſhared her whole ſoul, which, by the fervent returns of gratitude it made to the firſt great cauſe of her happineſs, acquired ſtrength to ſupport it.—Perhaps the whole world does not exhibit another ſuch piece of beautiful nature as what was now ev'ry day to be ſeen at the caſtle; where, next to Lady Gertrude herſelf,

herſelf, Mr. and Mrs. Armatage were honoured and reſpected, not as the founders, but the artificers of a bleſſing which deſpair had levelled, and hope could not rebuild. When Mrs. Johnſon loſt the packet, ſhe laid the foundation; and when Richard and Sarah Adams picked it up, the firſt column was raiſed: but all will allow that the moſt difficult part would never have been finiſhed without the unremitting labours of thoſe ſtrong hands and warm hearts by whom it was undertaken.

Lord Fitzhenry had gained, as well as Miſs Davenport, a good deal of heart's-eaſe by the return of Sir William.—He heard of his family and was comforted—he heard there was a poſſibility of Lord Wardor's recovery, and was rejoiced;—and he heard ſomething elſe which made him feel more than either comforted or rejoiced.——Whatever that ſomething may be, a ſecret it was, a ſecret it is, and a ſecret it ſhall be till I have more time to diſcloſe it. For, like a weary traveller drawing near the end of his journey, who feels every ſtep more than he did a mile at his firſt ſetting out, ſo I, being near the end of my pages, as ardently wiſh to reſt from my labours, and ſhould ill brook any let or hindrance that I was to meet with in the way.

Who could reſiſt a kneeling lover?—a lover ſo amiable as Montague Davenport!—Montague had knelt, and Adelaide had conſented to be his, at the ſame time that her brother and her friend were united—a day at no great diſtance—a day expected with ardour—a day then unrivalled in happineſs, but

ſince

ſince followed by many ſucceſsful competitors—a day that for the laſt ten years Hymen has doubly conſecrated, and calls it the moſt brilliant of his feſtivals.

——I beg your pardon, reader; I am a little premature in my deſcription of this happy day, as the couples are not yet married in my book, though they have been ſo many years married out of it. I would aſk, Can it ever be too early or too late to tell you that thoſe for whom you are intereſted are happy? If not, the account I have given may do as well now as at any other time.

Lady Gertrude propoſed to her ſon, on a remarkably mild morning, that he ſhould give her an airing in one of his open carriages, a few miles on the turnpike-road; and if he did not accept the challenge with avidity, his reluctance proceeded from his fears for her health only; for to her pleaſures he would have ſacrificed the deareſt of his own.

As he drove ſlowly within ſight of the cottage once inhabited by the Davenport family, and which had always been kept up in the ſame ſtyle of elegant ſimplicity as in the life time of its maſter, Lady Gertrude ſaid, William, I have uſed a little ſtratagem to ſteal you away from your other friends, that for one ſerious hour I may have you all to myſelf; and now that I have confeſſed the fraud, I think I am entitled to your pardon; and ſhall alſo require your whole attention to the ſubject on which I want to conſult you.

Indeed, my dear mother, you might have commanded

manded me at a much leſs riſk than the danger of your getting cold: let me turn the horſes—let us go back; and when you are in your cloſet, I will moſt cheerfully attend you—not for an hour only, but as many hours as you pleaſe.

No, ſhe replied, I am well wrapped up; let us purſue our drive. When I am in the ſame place with all my treaſures, I do not feel comfortable to be ſeparated from any part of them; but now that I have the fortitude to confine myſelf to one, I mean to be eloquent, and there is no danger that our tête-à-tête will be interrupted.

All this beating about the buſh was only to introduce a propoſal, which her ladyſhip had much reaſon to ſuppoſe would not be received by her ſon with his uſual graciouſneſs; and which, if made in her family circle, there was ſtill a greater chance of its being over-ruled by the balance of argument, if not by the balance of power, as it conveyed a regular and digeſted plan of ſeparation.—The caſtle was to be left to Sir William and Lady Montreville—Herſelf and Mrs. Davenport, Montague and Adelaide, to occupy the cottage, till a more proper reſidence could be provided for their future eſtabliſhment.

Sir William ſmiled, and aſſured his mother that he had but one objection, and that was to the whole of a plan that militated againſt his peace, his comfort, and his happineſs. Let us, my beloved mother, at leaſt continue ſo long together till we know what it is to be tired of each other. In the mean time,

whenever

whenever you ſee ſuch an event likely to happen, begin as ſoon as you pleaſe to buid a colony, to which any diſſatisfied perſon of our party may occaſionally change the ſcene without changing the neighbourhood. Lady Gertrude conſented for the preſent to drop a ſubject which her affectionate ſon declared to be the only one that he could not liſten to with ſubmiſſion; and as there are frequently things to be done, prudent without being deſirable, it is very likely, that on their return, when Lady Gertrude experienced the joy of beholding all her treaſures at one view, the oppoſition of her ſon appeared the ſweeteſt of all poſſible oppoſitions.

LORD Fitzhenry's family arrived at the caſtle three days before the nuptials of Sir William and Montague. When there are ſo many occaſions of diſplaying joy in its moſt lively colours, one is diſtracted how to do them all juſtice; and though I chooſe to bring every ray of that ſoul-cheering luminary into one vortex, to ſet off my wedding feſtival, yet I would not have any of my readers ſuppoſe that the meeting of the Fitzhenrys did not afford a very decent repaſt of nature's moſt animated tranſports: to complete them, there only was wanting the certainty of Lord Wardor's recovery, which ſtill remained doubtful.

THIS wedding will be very difficult, for one who was never at a wedding in her life, to ſet about deſcribing; I therefore had better not riſk any of my own imagery, but tell you exactly how it has been often and often repeated over to me by Mrs. Armatage,

tage, who is one of the moſt pleaſant and charming women that can be imagined.

My good man, ſaid ſhe, who you muſt know is always in the fidgets when any thing is to be done which he thinks cannot be done rapidly enough, awakened me the morning we were to go on duty, even before day had ſhewn its face, by walking from one room to the other—up ſtairs—down ſtairs—ringing bells—calling the ſervants—in ſhort, it was impoſſible to ſleep; ſo I got up too, and added all that was in my power to the agreeable confuſion. When his wig had been three times re-powdered, and his ſhoes ſix times re-buckled, it was high time to make our appearance at the caſtle. The firſt perſon we met there was Lady Gertrude.—Our meeting on ſuch an occaſion, if I were to repeat it, would, from her ladyſhip's condeſcenſion, reflect too great honour on her humble neighbours; ſo I paſs that over. As I looked around me, to ſee if any of the brides and bridegrooms were ſtanding in my way, that I might avoid running againſt them, inſtead of the graceful William, or the elegant Montague, I ſaw a little ſnug-faced old man, neatly clad, ſitting behind the door; and by his ſide neither the beautiful Adelaide, nor the Hebe-cheeked Emeline, but a nice-looking ſmirking dame, who, but for the appendages of time, a ſtooping body, wrinkled brow, and ſilver hair, might from her ſmiles and her dreſs have been miſtaken for a bride, though not for either of *the* brides.—I aſked who they were—Lady Gertrude told me, that next to my huſband and myſelf, they were the friends who had done her

the

the greateſt ſervice, and preſented me to Richard and Sarah Adams, by whom I was immediately created a lady in my own right. Lady Gertrude made no other apology for this addition to her party, but by ſaying ſhe had no right to diſpoſe of her new-found treaſure, but with the approbation of thoſe whom Providence had choſen for its agents, to diſcover the dark mine where it had been ſo long concealed. The treaſure, of whom ſhe was now ſpeaking, ruſhed at this moment into the arms of her fond mother—the ſiſter-bride next made her *entrée*. I can, as you find, deſcribble Richard and Sarah Adams (ſaid ſhe), but there is a perfection in beauty like theirs, which to deſcribe would be abſolute preſumption.—The very bride-maids were angels, and the bridegrooms abſolute divinities.—So then, continued Mrs. Armatage, when we were all married, and come a little to our rationality, Lady Gertrude having alternately embraced them, and ſtill retaining the hand of Adelaïde—My children! my beloved children, ſaid ſhe, how intricate, how inexplicable are the ways by which the hand of Providence conducts us! ways that terminate in good, if we have but the patience to perſevere in them.—Many confuſed threads occupy the loom in which our fates are woven; and however difficult to unravel, you will find at the laſt that they form regular leaves, regular flowers, and, if we are not impatient, will give a beautiful colouring to our deſtiny.

TILL my deſtiny changes, I will *watch*, never *deſpair*, or be *impatient*.

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